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ABSTRACT

This report profiles 12 programs conducted as part of the Hitachi Foundation's Partnerships in Economic and Educational Opportunity Initiative. The introduction and overview explain the goals of the initiative, which was undertaken to improve the economic and career options available to young people who have traditionally been underserved by schools in making the connections from school to work. Next, 16 lessons learned from the projects, including the following lessons, are discussed: (1) community-based partnerships serve youth better; (2) flexibility counts; (3) understanding culture is key; (4) entrepreneurship is an option; (5) connect staff, volunteers, and culture; (6) public service yields public benefits; (7) meaningful work offers lasting value; (8) youth are a program resource; (9) cultivate innovative human resources; (10) alternative experience has value; and (11) commitment is key. Presented next are profiles of the programs, which were conducted in diverse rural and urban settings characterized by diverse economic, racial, and cultural conditions. All profiles contain an overview, lessons learned, challenges faced and overcome, and information about project planners and their roles. Concluding the report are a final set of lessons, a list of 10 generally available resources, and

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definitions of selected Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills know-how and workplace competencies. (MN)

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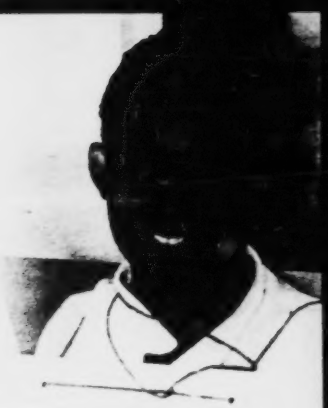

Creating Economic Opportunities for Every Young Person

ED 448 308

Lessons from The Hitachi Foundation's Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity Initiative

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Creating Economic Opportunities for Every Young Person

MDC Inc.
May 2000

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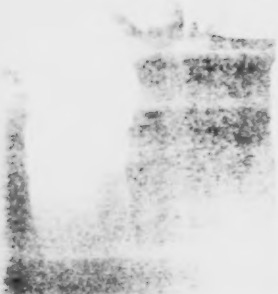

Lessons from The Hitachi Foundation's Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity Initiative

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The Hitachi Foundation is a nonprofit, philanthropic organization that promotes social responsibility through effective participation in global society. The Foundation seeks to build the capacity of all Americans, particularly those underserved by traditional institutions. The Foundation helps people address the multicultural, community, and global challenges they face.

Hitachi, Ltd., a Japanese transnational corporation established The Hitachi Foundation in 1985 to better fulfill its responsibilities as a corporate citizen in America. For Hitachi, Ltd., the mark of the Foundation's success is not the visibility it brings to the corporation. Instead, its success is measured by its contribution to a better society.

MDC Inc. works with public and nonprofit development institutions, policymakers, and opinion leaders in the South to address workforce and economic development challenges that impede progress for the region and its people. MDC analyzes issues and develops policy, program, and institutional capacity to help regional leaders and development institutions respond to economic change, with an emphasis on approaches that benefit poor people and poor places.

Established in 1967, MDC is a private nonprofit research organization supported with grants and contracts from foundations; federal, state, and local governments; and the private sector.

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Acknowledgments

There would be no story to tell in this report if it were not for the perseverance and selfless work of youth development practitioners and the young people who fill their programs. For the past three years, we at MDC have had the pleasure of working with and learning from the staff and participants from 12 of these programs — the merest fraction of such programs across the country — and we are both awed and humbled by their talents. Their passion and commitment, their willingness to share their successes and their failures, their hunger to learn and achieve, and their creativity and spirit inspire us.

We are grateful to The Hitachi Foundation (THF) and its staff for including us in the Partnerships in Economic and Educational Opportunity initiative and for the support and assistance they have provided us over the course of this project. THF's emphasis on reflection and learning has given us the opportunity to deepen our own knowledge of the field while working with participants to create a learning community.

Several colleagues took a significant amount of time out of their full days to review the lessons we gleaned from this experience and drafts of this report. Mark Constantine, a senior consultant to MDC, helped us organize our thoughts, develop the structure, and interview other professionals in the field. Sarah Rubin, MDC's senior associate in economic and workforce development research, provided valuable insights about our lessons and a great deal of background resources. Nova Henderson, MDC's assistant to the management team, edited the final document with her unusually keen eye and good humor. MDC staff also greatly benefited from the able help of Ali Korein, who interned with us, and Adam Mitchell, our former research staff assistant. Willis Bright of The Lilly Endowment, Connie Spinner of the Public Education Network, Pat Turner of The Children's Museum of Atlanta, and Lois Vermilya of X-Spanned Potential gave our concept paper and lessons a thorough review, and their thoughtful analysis vastly improved our final document.

Our deep appreciation goes out to all of you. Thank you.

Message

from the President of The Hitachi Foundation

At the racing pace of change that we've come to accept as the norm, 1995 seems so long ago, so 20th century. Yet, the circumstances that led the Foundation to launch the ***Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity*** initiative in August of that year persist. As if immutable despite unprecedented prosperity, twenty percent of our children live in poverty. Quality education is a means out but schools are still challenged to strengthen the academic performance of their students *and* prepare them for work. Technological advances and globalization continue to alter the nature of work and the skills needed for success in the new economy. But underserved youth are disproportionately concentrated in schools lacking rigorous preparation and in communities lacking role models and opportunities.

The Hitachi Foundation noticed in 1995 that school systems were placing greater emphasis on programs linked to local employers offering students direct workplace experience. However, few schools had the means to run effective school-to-career programs on their own. This hasn't changed.

The Foundation knew in 1995 that community organizations could help bridge formal education and work. Yet many organizations touched only a small number of young people, and frequently they operated without the formal support and involvement of schools. This hasn't changed.

We thought that collaborative partnerships — involving community members and organizations, schools and employers — could increase the odds of improving academic results and career options for young people. But these tri-sector partnerships were not easy. The partners didn't speak the same language. They rarely began with common aspirations or expectations. This too remains unchanged.

Our *Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity* initiative was an attempt to learn how to change these seemingly unyielding conditions from experiences on the ground. When I first met the participants in this initiative I was immediately taken by the diversity of the group. They were Asian, Caucasian, Latino, American Indian, and African American. They were gray hairs and college kids from the Appalachian hills of Kentucky to inner-city Detroit. They were mentoring in Philadelphia, connecting to cultural roots while restoring adobe churches in New Mexico, or creating a greeting card business in Connecticut. Some were seasoned and savvy and others were new to this work.

Yet, despite their diversity, they had much in common. They wanted to make a real difference for kids and change the conditions that limit progress. They were not satisfied with feel-good anecdotes. They knew that their success required a kind of rigor that is new to nonprofit management. They wanted to learn how to assess progress, measure results, and make course corrections based on solid data. They wanted to be leaders of learning organizations and catalysts for large-scale reform. But few had ever attempted to manage in this way.

This report shares some of the lessons from our grantees. Their experience has implications for systems larger than their individual programs — school systems, employment and training systems, public policy development. These grassroots organizations and thousands of others like them are our best chance for change in communities, states, and the nation. But only a few ever connect with these larger systems. We at The Hitachi Foundation hope to help make that connection. This report is an important step forward.

— Barbara Dyer, President
The Hitachi Foundation

Introduction

A participant in Cornerstones, New Mexico

"I want to be an engineer. I found out that I do like to do math, and I do like science, and [the program director] encouraged me to go on to college, and that's why I'm at the University of Pennsylvania."

— Sonni Parker, Community Block Builders program graduate and college student

"I lived in East Oakland, and it was in bad shape with crack and homeless people and the psychiatric hospital closing down and putting people out on the street. The Eureka program was the first time I was around college-educated women besides teachers. Even though it's a math and science program, they use that as a tool to get to you, to expose you to things. I was fortunate enough to have people point me in the right direction."

— Stephanie Garcia, Eureka program graduate and college student

A participant in Impact, a Community Block Builders program, Philadelphia, PA

"Living in the projects to many is a disadvantage. Instead of looking at the potential in a child, they look for the bad things. With the help of my mother and the science center staff, I was able to overcome the myths that surround children who are raised in the projects. Instead of being poor as I was labeled, I was able to realize that I am rich and can overcome any obstacle that is placed in my way."

— Joavan Smithers, YouthALIVE! program graduate and college student

"Where would you be today if it weren't for this program?"
"I'd be dead, honest to God."

— Cornerstones program graduate and former gang member

Cornerstones is a historic restoration and youth development program in New Mexico. Its participants include high school dropouts, former gang members, and youth with criminal convictions. The program fills a gap in preparing young people for their futures that has meant the difference between life and death for at least this one young man, and it has changed the lives of many more.

Like the other youth development programs from across the U.S. that participated in The Hitachi Foundation's *Partnerships in Education* initiative, Cornerstones provides the opportunity for young people to learn employment skills, plan for a future career, and finish their education. These 12 community-based organizations (CBOs) focus on meeting the needs of youth who are underserved by

schools in making the connections from school to work. The disconnections happen for all kinds of reasons — race, gender, education and training needs, family income, or geographic isolation.

While community-based programs are typically small and work outside of the traditional education infrastructure, the results are undeniable — one youth at a time, one life at a time, they are making a difference in our future and in our communities. Results like these are why so many people put so much time, effort, and resources into community-based youth development programs.

> I view you as the ones who are really the change agents. You're the ones who find the new approaches, who create the projects, who see the opportunities out there. You are the innovators and the catalysts.
>
> *Joe Kasputys, Chairman of the Board, The Hitachi Foundation, to the Partnerships program participants at the annual convening in April 1999.*

The 12 programs in the Partnerships project have made their mark in communities where success is hard to come by. While their communities, their strategies, and their community partners vary greatly, these programs make young people their priority mission. The dedicated people who run these programs hold at least this one belief in common: no young person is expendable. They understand the need to reach the youth whom society ignores or rejects, regardless of their socioeconomic status, personal background, or geographic location. They understand that young people on the margins of the economy and/or of opportunity need programs that create clear pathways to education, careers, and self-sustaining work. In an age when the economic penalties for being unprepared for the workforce are greater than ever, these programs are demonstrating that every young person can have a productive future.

And these programs are not "make-work" just to "keep teenagers out of trouble." They provide the opportunity, exposure, and skills development that are important factors in the future success of underserved youth. Young people are learning about their options, about how to plan for and achieve a career, and many

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A high school English class of the Puente Project, California

are learning whole new sets of marketable skills and life skills at the same time. The results are valuable not only to the youth and to our economic future, but also to our communities: monuments are being restored, boats are being built, and businesses are being created and managed.

> The reality is that everybody has to be trained in a skill that's going to be useful, and probably, with what we know about lifetime learning — whether it's at the university or at the community college or just on the job — everybody will continue learning. Education doesn't end with high school, and it's making that connection, it's making students see that as they look into the future.
>
> *Charles Clarke, partner with Impact's Community Block Builders, Principal of Mastbaum High School*

And if it can happen here — from the isolated, sparsely populated Chugach region of Alaska to the poverty-stricken, inner-city Hunts Point neighborhood in The Bronx — it can happen in other communities as well. Every community has assets that can provide the community context and potential partners necessary to connect even the hardest-to-reach youth to a pathway to careers.

The *Partnerships* initiative convened program staff, youth participants, and community partners from these dozen programs across the country, from different cultures, with different goals and different strategies, to discuss why and how their programs operate and to learn from each other's experiences. Over time, core lessons emerged. This reports tells the story of the key lessons from these programs — essential truths for funders, educators, and practitioners as the work of connecting young people to meaningful work continues. Those lessons follow, as well as the stories that illustrate them and profiles of the programs involved.

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Who needs to read this?	What will they learn from it?
Youth Development Practitioners	*Examples of success — an understanding of some common factors that contributed to the success of these programs and of some of the common challenges that remain*
Local Funding Agency Staff, Community Foundation Staff	*An understanding of how small programs, even newly established ones, operated outside the traditional education infrastructure can have great impact*
Local Government Officials	*The benefits of strategic alliances between public and community-based organizations to fill a community's unmet needs in youth and workforce development*
School Board Members and System Administrators	*Ideas for community partnerships to meet the needs of youth that are not easily or cost-effectively addressed within school programming*
Community-Based Organization Staff	*Ideas for nontraditional youth development programming; networking and contact information to learn more about types of programs that may benefit your community and how to go about developing them*
Experts in the Youth Development Field	*A core set of lessons that are transferable to other youth programs*
Policymakers	*A greater understanding of the policy barriers preventing community-based organizations from reaching their full potential as successful providers of youth development programs*
Foundation Staff and Trustees	*Documentation of the benefits of supporting small, community-based partnerships in youth development and of the value of investing in reflective learning and peer networks*

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Overview

Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity

In 1995, The Hitachi Foundation began to take a new look at programs linking academics and workforce preparation for young people, especially programs outside the traditional education system. Long active in education and youth programming, Hitachi's new focus developed partly in response to increasing concerns about the education system's difficulties in meeting workforce preparation needs and the United States' corresponding disparity in economic opportunities, especially for ethnic and racial minorities.

While the Foundation recognized that the long-term goal must be to make our educational institutions and systems more effective in serving all youth, this initiative focused on meeting the needs of those segments of the population that are not served effectively now. Guided by a new, proactive strategy of investing in core initiatives to develop lasting improvements, The Hitachi Foundation created *Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity*.

The Initiative's Goals and Challenges

The initiative sought "to stimulate the establishment, strengthening, and/or expansion of collaborative efforts to enhance the academic achievement and economic opportunities of youth underserved by formal academic and vocational programs." The Foundation issued a request for funding proposals in August 1995 to nonprofit community organizations focusing on education and workforce development issues and targeting youth between the ages of 12 and 25 from underserved populations — communities of color and low-income communities. Proposed projects had to operate within a few parameters:

- formal, long-term partnerships with shared planning and resources, and substantive involvement in decision-making;
- academic and job-training elements integrated to expose youth to options and prepare them for the labor market; and
- identifying and documenting barriers to collaborative programs and effective strategies for overcoming those barriers.

Staff members from several Partnerships *programs at the first annual learning convening*

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Alan MacKenzie and a participant in Junior Art Makers, Southend Community Services, Hartford, CT

The specificity of the request for proposals reflected the knowledge in the field of strategic youth development at that time. Such programs are critical in addressing youths' needs not addressed by the traditional education system. Many small, community-based programs are effectively preparing individuals for the workforce, and many communities have developed innovative partnerships among local organizations, schools, and businesses to strengthen students' education. Community-based organizations also have a level of flexibility and rapid response not possible within school systems.

However, the RFP also encouraged proposals from projects that would grapple with remaining challenges. Community-based programs often encounter tough issues of scale, impact, and comprehensiveness of educational and workforce preparation that restrict their full impact. Increased collaboration among communities, agencies, formal education, and businesses are needed to resolve such issues. The Foundation sought to explore:

- how small programs could serve more youth without compromising quality or outcomes;
- how programs with a limited scope could be broadened through collaboration to address multiple dimensions in the lives of youth; and
- how multiple partners could work collaboratively over the long term to enhance programs and effectiveness.

Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity Participating Programs

Association of Science-Technology Centers – *Washington, DC*

Chugachmiut – *Anchorage, AK*

Cornerstones Community Partnerships – *Santa Fe, NM*

Forward in the Fifth – *Berea, KY*

Girls, Inc. – *San Leandro, CA*

Greater Detroit One to One – *Detroit, MI*

Greater Washington Urban League – *Washington, DC*

Impact Services Corporation – *Philadelphia, PA*

One to One Philadelphia – *Philadelphia, PA*

The Puente Project – *Oakland, CA*

South Bronx Community Coalition – *Bronx, NY*

Southend Community Services – *Hartford, CT*

The Hitachi *Partnerships in Education and Economic Opportunity* initiative is a living laboratory, a geographic and programmatic cross section of youth development organizations engaged over time, and leveraging their individual experiences through a peer-learning network. Some programs were brand-new, local programs working with just a few partners; others were older, larger, and more collaborative. Some dealt with just one or two aspects of education and workforce development; others were more comprehensive. Program strategies included mentoring, entrepreneurial and enterprise development training, academic enrichment coupled with experiential learning, exposure to and exploration of education and career options, and service-based learning.

If people paid more attention to young people, instead of thinking of them in terms of stereotypes, and actually made an effort to get to know them, it would make a world of difference in how they think about youth. I speak really candidly, but when people meet each other, we have this really bad habit as human beings that we look at some body and just in looking at them, based on what they look like, we size them up and we think we know everything about them. If I had met Steven on the street, I would have thought, "Whoa, I better get on the other side of the block," because I would be afraid based on a stereotype, my own lack of knowledge or openness. I have really come to see all these young people to have such value.

— Beth Johnson, past executive director of Cornerstones, in reference to Steven Gonzalez, a youth participating in the South Bronx Multi-Media Initiative

Lessons on Learning

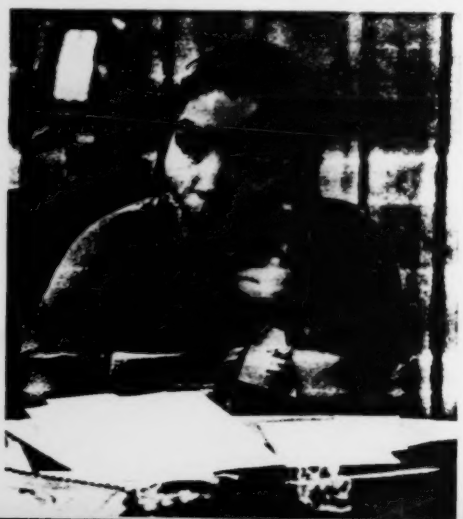
In addition to funding 12 programs to test ideas, The Hitachi Foundation gave a grant to MDC Inc. to help advance the work of the programs by connecting them to each other, facilitating peer learning, and capturing the lessons from their common experiences. MDC, a 33-year-old nonprofit organization whose mission is to increase economic opportunity for poor people and poor places, has a great deal of experience in multisite initiatives and reflective learning and approached this task through a variety of strategies. In addition to three structured annual convenings to learn, reflect, and build on collective knowledge, the participants engaged in sharing through site visits and regular electronic and phone contact. MDC also provided limited technical assistance to strengthen collaboration, improve programs, and help institutionalize programs that worked.

While this funding for reflection and learning was in addition to The Hitachi Foundation's regular program funding, the long-term benefits in program effectiveness and documentation

Hitachi has done something else with these convenings, which is develop a new con struct, and the new construct is very differ ent from professional associations. What Hitachi has created is a group of folks who can come and work together. We may share the common body politic of youth develop ment, but this is apolitical. It's really quite a remarkable experience.

Bob Rath, Director, Our Piece of the Pie

The programs operated in a variety of cultures and communities. Some were rural, some were urban, from Lizard Lick, Kentucky, to inner-city Philadelphia, from the Inuit village of Nanwalek, Alaska, to the theme-park capital of the nation, Orlando, Florida. These programs served Alaskan natives, African Americans, Latinos, and Appalachians — rarely are so many cultures and places brought under the same umbrella in any kind of initiative. A result of this programmatic and cultural diversity was the chance to increase the capacity of each program by virtue of examining the work of others, work that on the face of it appears different but at its core is consistently relevant to each program.



A representative of Chugachmiut, Anchorage, AL, at the first convening

from which others can learn are a valuable investment. It is important to note that youth development professionals in community-based organizations are traveling little-known territory when trying to develop multidimensional programs through collaborative partnerships. Innovation, by its very nature, involves more trial and error than common knowledge. Youth development practitioners who wish to work across disciplines and sectors have few other opportunities to learn their craft — few professional associations, and no "how-to" guidebooks exist. Even peer outreach can be prevented by geographic isolation, limited budgets, small staffs, or lack of connections. The *Partnerships* initiative allowed them the means to overcome those obstacles and offered an objective lens through which to create a common understanding of their goals and to explore their strategies, successes, and shortcomings in a safe space, without ego or competition. The mutual nature of discoveries and revelations made them all the more powerful.

> When I come here [to the convenings], I grow personally, which in turn makes me a better professional and makes me better at what I do. There's no way I could have known the richness of all the other organizations and their programs from reading it on a piece of paper. To personally talk with Andy and Carol and Bob allows something that can't happen any other way — it's the personal contact that makes a difference.
>
> — *Tanya Tucker, former ASTC Program Manager*

> This Hitachi initiative has not only allowed us the opportunity to network and learn from one another and collaborate, it has helped show us how to do these things, teaching us to share and trust and listen. It's the creation over time of a space that is safe for learning, for relationships to evolve — these are all foundations of relationships necessary for learning.
>
> — *Felix Galaviz, Co Director, The Puente Project*

What Peer Learning and Support Networks Can Do

- *Accelerate professional growth*
- *Accelerate the transmission of good or new ideas*
- *Enhance participants' confidence to try new approaches and to act boldly*
- *Accelerate the formation of joint ventures*
- *Help pinpoint issues and opportunities with the field*
- *Strengthen the field*

Source: Intertwining Realities, 1998 Annual Report, The Hitachi Foundation

The learning network strategy could not have been successful without the full and enthusiastic cooperation of each program's staff or without The Hitachi Foundation's assurance that the goal was to learn how to do this work better, not to prove that it was being done perfectly. Convening people from different kinds of programs from different places allowed for honest, critical reflection without turfism or the fear of repercussions. And the young people from these programs who participated in the convenings added a great deal of knowledge about why some strategies worked and some did not, what needs these programs met in their lives, and why these programs are so important to their futures.

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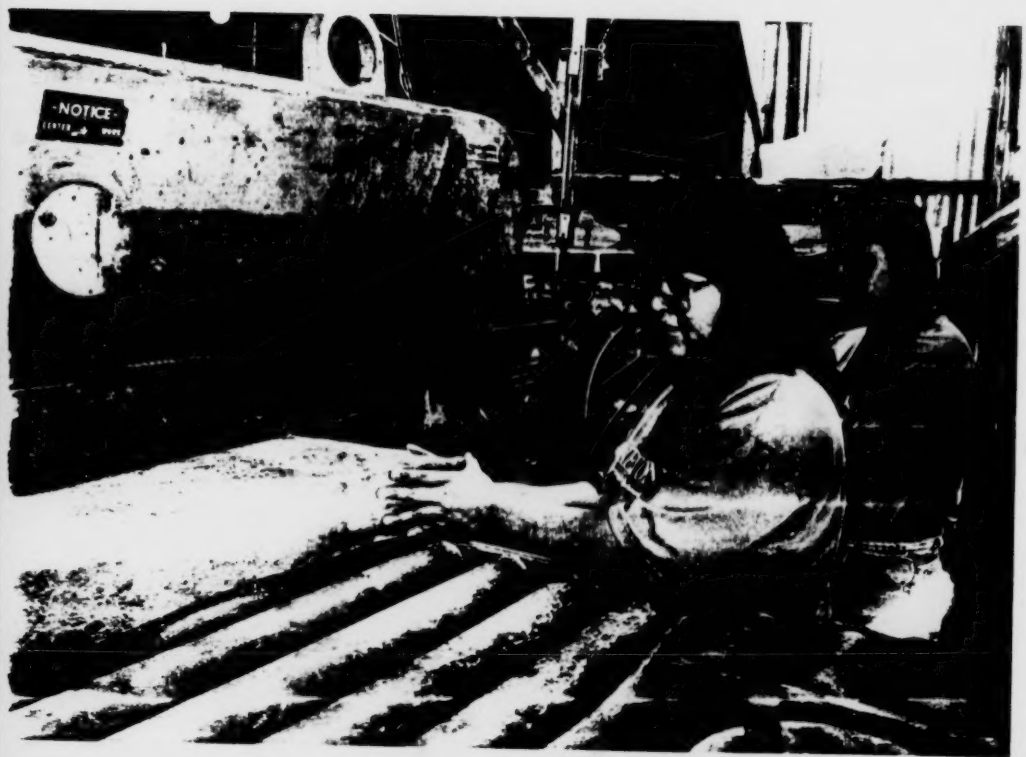
Lessons Learned

Three years of action, reflection, sharing, and dialog by staff and participants of these 12 community-based programs has generated a number of insights into the reasons behind their achievements and challenges. It is important to note that these programs are not a few isolated success stories, but rather a good indicator of what is possible.

This report makes a concerted effort not to restate theories and lessons that already exist in the massive amount of research and writing done on the subject of linking education and work experience for youth. Our lessons learned are just that — specific findings from this learning network.

The lessons gleaned from the *Partnerships* initiative are grouped into two categories. The first group contains lessons derived from reflecting on the kind of programs selected for this initiative: community-based efforts involving multiple partners. The second group contains lessons derived from reflecting on how these programs go about their work: strategies and operations.



Crafting materials for historic preservation work, Cornerstones, Sante Fe, NM

Lessons on Partnerships Led by Community-Based Organizations

Lesson: Community-Based Partnerships Serve Youth Better

Effective youth-serving community-based organizations (CBOs) put young people first, and they work by operating in multiple dimensions of their lives: schooling, self-understanding, work experience, family support or lack thereof, and connections to the broader community. To do this well, partners are a must, and CBOs, even when small, are a natural entity to bridge the diverse resources that are needed for youth to succeed at moving from education to career. Strong partnerships allow both personal relationships with the young people and comprehensiveness of services without sacrificing either.

Connie Spinner of the Public Education Network providing technical assistance to program staff at the first convening

It sounds simple: focus on the young people, create a comprehensive program to address what is happening in their lives, and develop collaborative partnerships to implement and institutionalize your program. The reality is, it is anything but simple.

To stay personally involved and committed to the success of each young person is no easy task in light of the demands faced by youth and program staff. And to create an effective program that deals with the broad range of issues that are barriers to academic and employment success is an extremely difficult task, full of trial and error. The intensity and comprehensiveness of such programs are why collaborative partnerships are so critical — unless the community-based organization managing the program can become a highly functioning mega-organization overnight, it will not be able to achieve its goals without including a variety of strategic partners in its efforts.

In many communities, public and private sector organizations, schools, and families involved in education and work skills development have been struggling long and hard — and sometimes with each other — over how to meet their young peoples' needs. A community-based organization can provide the neutral ground and safe environment necessary for these multiple partners to develop strong relationships. They provide an opportunity to put aside turfism and agendas to concentrate on mutual goals and develop effective strategies to meet them.

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For example, Girls, Inc., partners with a private college to provide a home for the Eureka program's summer camp, and it links girls to the real world through a vast network of business connections. One to One (Philadelphia) could not possibly reach the scale it has without the deep connections to the business community that the Chamber of Commerce provides. One to One (Detroit) reaches its youth participants by working through the schools, as opposed to trying to reach them one at a time and expending the vast majority of its resources in the process. ASTC's *Youth*ALIVE! Orlando Science Center program collaborates with the city's housing authority to locate youth who could benefit from the program. Each of the programs operates within such partnerships, as the "Partners" listing that accompanies each program's profile shows.

Lesson: Flexibility Counts

CBOs often have a capacity for flexible programming and service delivery and usually have a limited bureaucracy, allowing quicker responses to changing conditions.

Addressing the barriers to a young person's successful education and development of work skills is like tracking the smallest ripples on the ocean's surface on a windy day. Like the wind and tide creating a constantly shifting pattern, the many influences in young people's lives are dynamic and changing by nature. Just like the alertness and attention necessary to track those ripples, flexibility and responsiveness are necessary to deal with or take advantage of the constantly changing conditions in communities and young people's lives.

For example, getting access to young people is an essential part of the job of Chugachmiut's Youth Coordinator. The person most recently in this job is just out of college and a native Alaskan, easily able to identify with the Native youth. Given the informality of Native culture and the premium placed on trusting relationships, he spent a great deal of time getting to know village leaders and school staff. Through them he was able to reach the youth. At times, he opted for more adventurous, spontaneous approaches to building trust with youth. He determined that some essential messages about what it takes to build a career were not getting through to the program participants. Within a couple of weeks, he set up and held a five-day Kayak Camp for the youth in Port Graham, a logistical feat made possible

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by his responsiveness and the flexibility provided by the program's small size. He later held the same type of camp for the youth in Tititlek. In these forums, he had a captive audience of youth, away from home, where they could speak freely about their hopes and dreams in a supportive environment.

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson: Developing Partnerships is Hard Work, but Worth It

Building relationships and developing trust among partners is a challenge. It requires a significant amount of time and individual effort to be successful. For many organizations that aspire to create strong partnerships, resources are already stretched thin. Strategic, long-term partnering — knitting together a group of partners that have what the organization needs and need what the organization has to offer — provides a significant return on investment for all partners.

Love at first sight might be rare, but trust at first sight is even more so. Just like any personal relationship, building a trusting relationship among partners takes a long time and a great deal of effort and attention. The irony is that the organizations that would benefit greatly from strong partnerships are usually those with little resources to spare to develop those partnerships. Those meager resources, when expended to identify and develop strategic partnerships, can provide an incredible payoff.

If time, money, and results were not important, community-based organizations wouldn't need partners to begin with. In fact, with all the resources it takes to develop a collaborative partnership, it is in every partner's interest that the relationship be long term to maximize the return on those resources. And as in any relationship, any partner who is not benefiting is not going to have much reason to stick with it over the long term.

Southend Community Services' Our Piece of the Pie (OPP) offers one example of using collaborative partnerships to provide comprehensive services. The program draws on Trinity College and other local higher education institutions to supply youth managers — coaches and role models to school-aged youth in OPP programs. OPP also partners with community institutions such as Hartford Hospital, the parks and recreation department, and area businesses as work sites and customers for youth-run businesses. For example, the program's youth boat-building business, River Wrights, uses materials donated by area hardware and lumber businesses to handcraft row boats and canoes, which the parks and recreation department purchases for use as rental boats at local public lakes.

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Lesson: Being Nontraditional is a Challenge

Community-based programs encounter challenges with building credibility and securing funding because they are often viewed as "outsider" organizations, separate and isolated from schools and colleges that typically provide school-to-work programs.

Education and workforce preparation have traditionally been the province of the k-12 and postsecondary school systems, and community-based organizations have not traditionally been a partner in their efforts. For start-up and young programs with little or no track record of results, it is a difficult area to break into. Betting on an unknown is not something most funding sources, or local governments, or businesses are likely to do. Research, solid planning, strategic partnering, and a few small successes can help build credibility and increase funding opportunities.

For example, to have any ability to reach a level of scale worth the investment, One to One (Philadelphia) organized BEGIN in partnership with the Greater Philadelphia School District and the Chamber of Commerce. BEGIN staff recruit business mentors for the program, in concert with the Chamber, and the participating high schools have program coordinators who recruit students; a school district staff person oversees the work of the local high school coordinators. As an outside organization, One to One faces the challenge of how to work with high school coordinators who are unable to meet their recruiting goals. One to One cannot hold the coordinators and teachers accountable — they can only push and prod from the outside, hoping for a change. Meanwhile, to maintain its credibility and increase its opportunities for future funding, the program must still meet its obligations and demonstrate successes.

Cornerstones and Chugachmiut staff conferring at the first convening.

Lessons on Strategies and Operations

Culture and community

Lesson: Understanding Culture is Key

A strong working knowledge of the culture in which young people live can be an indispensable asset in attracting and retaining hard-to-reach youth.

Culture affects how we learn, what we value, how we relate to the community around us, and the options and opportunities to which we are exposed. For a program to meet young people's needs effectively, it must be developed with an understanding of and respect for their cultural background. This context can draw youth to a program and create connections with their heritage, their families, their peers, and their communities that keep them in the program.

For example, the South Bronx Community Coalition's Multi-Media Education/Leadership Initiative capitalizes on the Hunts Point neighborhood's history of arts and entertainment. The program is housed at The Point community center alongside multiethnic dance, music, visual arts, voice, and drama programs. Creativity has long been celebrated in this community, and that is part of the draw for young people to the Multi-Media program, where youth learn the employment and technical skills of the videography industry while documenting activities in their neighborhood. Youth commit to at least a year in the program, and during that time usually encounter problems at home or in school that affect their participation. The program director uses his knowledge of the community and its culture to work with the youths on an individual basis to develop their conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.

Lesson: Entrepreneurship is an Option

Creating pathways to sustainable employment within a community is a particular challenge given the labor market realities of rural or economically depressed communities. For people who are committed to place, entrepreneurship programs can honor a person's heritage while providing a career path close to home. The skills that are developed are useful everywhere.

In our highly mobile society, rural communities are continuing to lose talented young people to places that offer more and better options for building a career. Inner-city neighborhoods experience the same exodus. As traditional industries decline, people leave. As more people leave, opportunities decline even more. But not all roads to prosperity have to lead away from home. Entrepreneurs — even young ones — can create a business and a living just about anywhere, especially with recent advances in information technologies. Even when it doesn't lead to a long-term business, entrepreneurship training imparts a basic understanding of business along with a range of analytic skills that are essential for the workplace, regardless of where a young person ends up.

For example, when the school-to-work movement began nationally, it reached into Kentucky only as deep as the urban areas. Rural communities, especially those in the isolated areas of the Appalachian Mountains, were far behind the movement when Forward in the Fifth (FIF), an education advocacy group in Southeast Kentucky, began to research a school-to-work strategy. FIF selected an entrepreneurship strategy, Educational Designs That Generate Excellence, in part because of the paucity of employers to whom students could connect for workplace experience.

Cornerstones participants on the job site with one of their mentors in historic building methods

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Lesson: Connect Staff, Volunteers, and Culture

Drawing staff and volunteers from the culture and communities served by the program can be a powerful contributor to program success; the staff member(s) and volunteers have a personal understanding of participants' backgrounds, and the participants gain exposure to a role model for what they, too, can accomplish.

An intimate understanding of people's cultural heritage — of the challenges unique to their background, of what they have and have not been exposed to, of their perceptions and experiences — is not easy to come by. Choosing staff and recruiting volunteers from a similar background as the youth served is the simplest way to achieve this critical knowledge, with the added bonus of being proof to a program's youth that people like them can succeed. They can also act as translators, helping youth understand the larger community and world of work, because being engaged in an experience is one thing, and knowing how to apply it in the greater world is another.

The Puente High School Project, for example, draws both staff and volunteer mentors from the Latino community in California. While open to young people of any race or ethnicity, Puente targets Latino high school students whose native language is not English. The goal of the two-year program is to increase the retention rate and matriculation rate of Latino students through instruction in writing and culturally relevant literature, academic and college counseling, and mentoring by professionals in the community. Puente's Latino staff are able to develop a program that respects youths' backgrounds while ensuring they have the skills and experiences necessary to function in a non-Latino business setting. The business mentors' cultural ties enable them to expose youth to different career opportunities and help them learn to navigate the business world.

Lesson: Public Service, for Public Benefits

Programs with a visible and intentional dimension of community service — public work in the public eye — can help validate the role youth can play in rebuilding community; they can improve the community's perception of the youth involved and can improve the youths' perceptions of themselves.

Underserved youth are often from populations overburdened with negative stereotypes. Be they poor country folk, or black inner-city youth, or native Spanish speakers, they are often seen as a social burden and often perceive themselves as not having much to contribute to their communities. These stereotypes and self-perceptions are not the insurmountable barriers they seem to be. By demonstrating young people's abilities and talents and investments in their communities publicly and for the public good, several of these programs have provided evidence that has validated the worth of these young people to other community members and to themselves.

For example, Cornerstones Community Partnerships focuses on teaching building preservation and construction skills to young Latino and American Indian youth while assisting them with completing their high school education. The young people learn this valuable trade by renovating historic monuments such as community churches. Many of the participants are post-adjudicated or former gang members whom community members would not usually hold in high esteem. However, this public work demonstrates to skeptics that these young people bring value and talent to their communities and that they are not defined solely by their past actions or associations. The young people also reap the self-esteem benefits of accomplishing tangible work appreciated by others.

Young people

Lesson: Meaningful Work, Lasting Value

Young people, even very young people, are capable of doing and managing meaningful work — renovating communities, building boats, starting and running businesses — that produces lasting value for themselves and their communities. Young people learn well in context when they are active participants in their learning. Work-based-learning experiences help eliminate the confusion about the relevance of academic learning.

Adults understand the sense of accomplishment, of ability, of self-esteem that comes from completing a meaningful, challenging task successfully. Young people can engage in such productive work experiences, and have the same positive reactions. Such meaningful work provides an experiential learning opportunity — the chance to learn while doing — and also to apply lessons learned in the classroom that may have seemed useless before.

In Impact's Community Block Builders program, young people whose vocational classes include making models of buildings as opposed to real buildings find themselves confronting the relevance of academics from day one. Using a tape measure requires an understanding of fractions and basic math; the precise use and placement of parts requires geometry; solving structural calculations requires algebra; making decisions based on technical terms, graphic symbols, and charts requires reading comprehension skills. After coming face-to-face with the skills necessary to get the job done, most program participants rise to the challenge of the construction task at hand *and* become more engaged in the school work necessary to accomplish it.

INPUTS	OUTPUTS
○ How to identify & build on community assets	○ How to set measurable outcomes
○ Resource development	○ How to get consistent commitment from volunteers, donors
○ Skills at planning & selling outcome measures	○ Sustainability, efficiency →

Some of the capacities to improve participating programs, identified by their staffs at the first convening

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Lesson: Leverage Experience into Leadership

Engaging youth in higher-level program positions — as business managers, program counselors, or work crew leaders — is a wise strategy to build a cadre of youth leaders from the program's community and provide them with additional skills and experience.

Creating a natural progression of work for skills development is the same as creating a natural progression of learning for knowledge development. Just as you learn basic math, then algebra, then calculus, young people can first learn basic employment skills, then skills related to their specific endeavor, then how to lead others in and manage the same efforts. With increased responsibility comes increased knowledge and skills, both of which can benefit the young people and the program in the shorter run and the community at large in the long run.

The Eureka program run by Girls, Inc., is one such program. Young women concentrate on developing their academic skills in the first two years during intensive residential summer programs of hands-on math and science work. The second two years of the program focus on work skills development and career exploration through summer internships, and during this period several of the young women intern as counselors for the younger girls' academic program. This structure provides role models to the younger girls while giving the older girls an opportunity to develop interpersonal and leadership skills that translate to other work environments and community efforts.

An historic church undergoing renovation by Cornerstones participants

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Lesson: Youth are a Program Resource

Youth participants can be an invaluable resource to program staff, keeping staff in touch with the reality of what youths' everyday experiences are in their communities, offering valuable, creative input into the structure and substance of their programs, and allowing the staff to adapt their programs and services accordingly.

CBOs may have the advantage of being smaller, nimble programs that adjust to a changing environment more rapidly than larger, more bureaucratic organizations, but that ability has little value without the knowledge of what is changing. The program's participants are the ones who are most up-to-date on what is happening in their lives, and maintaining personal relationships with program participants allows staff to stay informed. And just as any customer can offer ideas on what a business can do to provide better service or a better product, program participants often have insightful, creative suggestions for improving programs and program delivery.

The Association of Science-Technology Centers' *Youth*ALIVE! in the Workplace program places a high premium on feedback from youth participants. For example, at the Orlando Science Center site, youth help interpret exhibits for other young people as a part of their work skills development and training. The youth participants are able to assess visitors' reactions as their peers and relay feedback to Science Center Staff on "what's cool" and what's not, helping the staff to tailor exhibits and presentations to generate the most interest while still being educational.

Getting the work done

Lesson: Organizational Development is Not Optional

Attention to organizational development is as necessary as service delivery if a program is to survive. Staff training, cross-training, strategic planning, developing or adapting a documented curriculum, and funding development are critical — you have to mind the store.

The best program for developing the ability of young people to move into successful careers will not last long if the organization that runs it falls apart. Organizational maintenance and development are essential for long-term success. Staff burnout, funding problems, and failing to plan for success can cause an organization to founder as quickly as, or possibly even more quickly than, a poorly designed program. In small organizations with limited resources and staff committed to serving youth before all else, organizational development must be a conscientious effort, but the return on investment is worthwhile.

For example, Girls, Inc., and its Eureka program incorporate several strategies for

organizational maintenance and development that promote both the organization's and the program's long-term success. Girls, Inc.'s, national parent organization promotes staff development through annual meetings that include educational seminars, some of which relate directly to organizational development skills. Girls, Inc., also encourages promoting from within the organization. The Eureka program itself not only has documented processes and curriculum, but it also strives to constantly refine its processes and service delivery. Eureka also has the added benefit of engaging its older participants as counselors to the younger girls, exposing these young women to the possibility of future work in youth development and thus training its own potential future staff members.

Technical assistance providers and staff engage in a workshop exercise at the first convening

Lesson: Staff for Success

Staff members of effective programs have common characteristics — regardless of their backgrounds — that relate directly to program success:

- *they are entrepreneurial and flexible in the ideas they bring to program development and management — their resourcefulness and creativity can result in effective strategies to make a program successful;*
- *they are knowledgeable about and sensitive to the culture and community where they operate;*
- *they often bring working familiarity with partners outside the traditional fields of schooling and youth development and can build linkages to these partners.*

Our Piece of the Pie is staffed for success and has the benefit of entrepreneurial and skilled management. One of the program directors is an early retirement executive from a Fortune 500 company, bringing private sector strategies and creative problem-solving methods to the organization. The senior program staff's experience in business and community affairs allows them to build strong partnerships with their community's businesses and higher education institutions. And OPP's youth managers provide an understanding of participants' culture and community because they come from backgrounds identical to the youth with whom they work.

Lesson: Innovative Human Resources

Nontraditional adult staff, mentors, and volunteers from alternative populations, such as college students and senior citizens, can be powerful role models and mentors for youth.

Traditional role models and mentors for youth are often successful, active professionals with multiple demands on their time, a difficult group from which to attract volunteers. However, role models and mentors can come from a variety of populations, from college students to young professionals to senior citizens and retirees. Their life experiences, and willingness to share their time and attention, are the critical factors in a beneficial, productive relationship with a young person.

For Example, in the Greater Washington Urban League's Intergenerational School-to Work program, senior citizens serve as mentors to middle and junior high school students from Southeast Washington, DC. The high-poverty, high-crime neighborhood has few businesses from which to draw potential mentors, and the benefits of establishing role models within the community outweighed the benefits of mentors from outside the community. The participating senior citizens are retired, for the most part, and have more time to spend with the young people than working mentors. Many are grandparents and already have a great deal of experience with youth, and since the mentors are also residents of the community, they have a great deal of insight into the particular challenges these young people face.

Lesson: Alternative Experience has Value

Program staff who have not come up through the ranks in education or youth development can nevertheless bring a remarkable set of practical skills and passion rooted in life experience that makes them smart and capable of very creative program design.

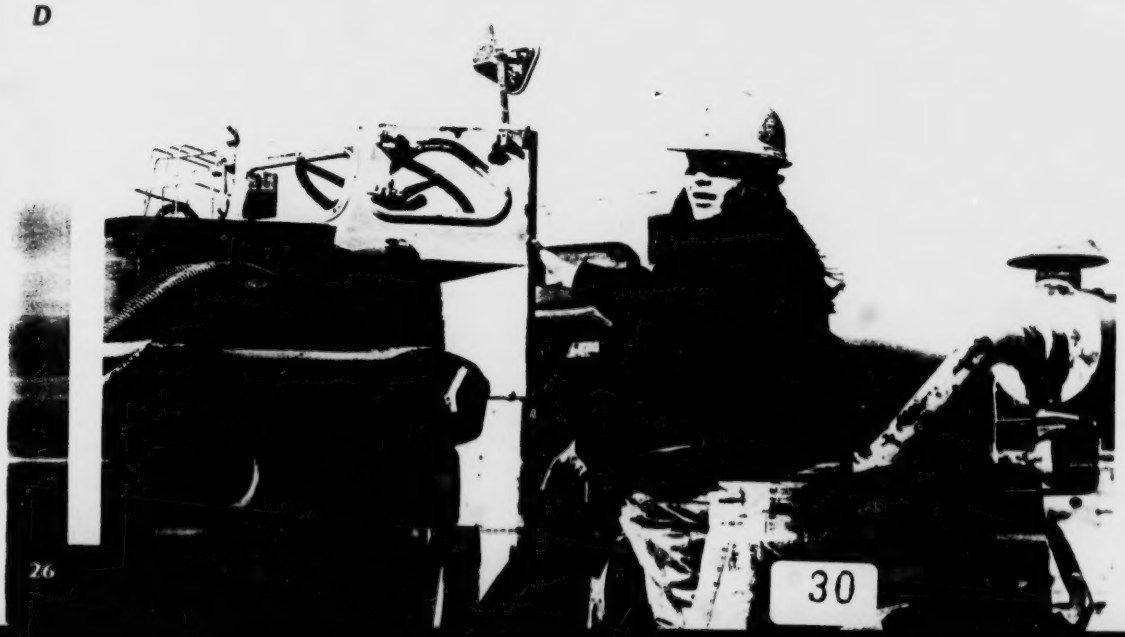
Managing successful education-to-career programs for youth involves the same core skills as managing any other successful business, organization, or project. The key characteristics of a youth program manager are a passion for helping young people succeed and the commitment to learning what it takes to make that success happen. While staff from outside the traditional youth development infrastructure may not have extensive theoretical knowledge of youth programs or familiarity with the ABCs of past federal programs, they also are not bound by the constraints of traditional practice. This freedom allows for creative thinking and experimentation that often lead to very effective programs.

Lesson: Commitment is Key

You can have the best program in the world, but it will not matter unless you have a committed group of adults engaged over time.

Tenacity, perseverance, passion for success, compassion, and a personal commitment to young people over the long haul in a core group of adult staff and volunteers are the key factors that quality programming cannot do without. Young people can blossom in any program if they have the benefit of a caring adult committed to their well-being and success, an adult whom they know will be with them every step of the way, fighting for their future.

While all of these programs are blessed with such caring and committed staff, Detroit One to One's staff provides a vivid example of the power of tenacity and perseverance. With a focus and determination that are palpable, the program's executive director moves this effort toward achieving success for its participants through the turbulence of a school system in upheaval and the shifting priorities of school-to-work funding. In the face of what seem to be insurmountable challenges, passion provides a forceful motivator to find a way to guide the program's youth toward a path to success. These champions for opportunities for young people are proof that commitment can make all the difference.



Cornerstones participant at work on a restoration job site

Program Profiles

Association of Science-Technology Centers, YouthALIVE! in the Workplace

Washington, DC

The benchmarks for success are here. They're the [program participants] sitting around the room here. It's an amazing thing. You work every day, and sometimes you wonder what it's all about, but it's right here, and it's wonderful.

— *Sam Joseph-Rowe, YouthALIVE! staff member, Miami Museum of Science*

Science and technology centers, museums, aquariums, zoos, and botanic gardens are engaging, informal learning centers for people of all ages in many urban and suburban areas. However, as with many other learning institutions, there are too few strategies to encourage and enable the participation of youth from underserved communities.

In 1991, the staff of Association of Science-Technology Centers, Inc. (ASTC), the professional association for science centers in the United States, recognized the potential of science centers as a resource for underserved youth and launched a nationwide initiative called *Youth*ALIVE! (Youth **A**chievement through **L**earning, **I**nvolvement, **V**olunteering, and **E**mployment). ASTC staff worked closely with a national network of museum staff from grantee institutions to develop, implement, and sustain programs that build the academic and career-related skills of underserved youth between the ages of 10 and 17. Although each museum-based program is slightly different, all the programs provide long-term learning and work opportunities for young people — middle school students focus on educational enrichment while high school students focus on work-based learning.

As the initiative evolved to meet the needs of the youth, network members found that there was a lack of useful and relevant materials to help the young people understand and continue to develop their newfound skills. So, with assistance from The Hitachi Foundation, ASTC developed *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* to deepen high school students' understanding of the world of work. The goals of *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* are:

- to help students working in *Youth*ALIVE! programs become aware of the work-related skills they have already acquired and what additional skills they will need for long-term career success; and
- to create a museum-based workplace that supports the development of those skills.

*Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* was piloted at 10 *Youth*ALIVE! sites: the Miami Museum of Science; the Chicago Academy of Sciences; the Brooklyn Children's Museum; the St. Louis Science Center; The Lied Discovery Children's Museum in Las Vegas, NV; the Orlando Science Center; the Science Museum of Minnesota; the Bay Area Discovery Museum in Sausalito, CA; Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills, MI; and Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, RI.

Overview

With funding from The Hitachi Foundation, ASTC staff developed a work skills curriculum based on the recommendations of the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). *(See page 83 for more information on SCANS.)* The curriculum's handbook contains a sequence of detailed activities and reflective exercises that help young people understand and enhance their workplace competencies. The balance of the program includes mentoring, job shadowing, and career exploration. This reinforcing combination creates powerful learning opportunities in a fun, stimulating environment.

> We learn job skills, so we have a head over other kids in the community who are sitting at home playing video games. [The program staff] teach you what to write on your resume, and what not to write. how to speak to people, how to be a leader. Everyone I work with in the Science Center encourages me and I try to encourage them.
>
> *Bryan, Orlando Science Center program participant*

The handbook for *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* is divided into 4 sections.

- **Section One** includes an introduction to the *Youth*ALIVE! model, an overview of the SCANS competencies, and staff training documents.
- **Section Two** gives an overview of the handbook's organization and suggests strategies for planning and use.
- **Section Three** contains a module for each of the five competencies — resources, interpersonal, information, systems, and technology. Each includes guides for the program leader and a series of self-assessment activities, learning activities, and reflection exercises designed to help the youth achieve awareness of their current skills within that competency, learn new skills, and reflect on how those skills would translate to other work experiences.
- **Section Four** are appendices that focus on complementary skills such as coaching, résumé writing, and job interviewing.

Programs that focus on work-based learning through mentoring, job shadowing, and career exploration complement the handbook's activities. For example, at the Orlando Science Center, youth rotate through departments as interns to gain experience with different kinds of careers, from exhibit interpretation to administration. They work directly with adult staff and volunteers in a mentor-style relationship while developing a range of new employment skills.

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Lessons

Engaging Environments

*Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* has shown that science and technology centers can provide a powerful setting for career exploration and preparation experiences for all young people. Through a youth-friendly environment that provides underserved youth with access to resources usually unavailable to them, the program has demonstrated how museums and other institutions can supplement more traditional career development and exploration programs offered by schools and youth organizations. Communities with any type of youth-friendly learning center should take note: Schools, a CBO, and a local zoo could do the same thing that ASTC has proven can work.

Real Work, Proven Skills

Like the best school-to-work efforts across the country, *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* gives young people real, meaningful work — as exhibit interpreters and museum staff — and treats them with respect. This well-designed curriculum, which is tied to nationally recognized standards (SCANS), helps ensure that participants will leave the program with skills and knowledge that have currency in the workplace.

A Common Infrastructure Eases Going to Scale

Science centers, by their very nature, tend to have a similar infrastructure and resources. Such commonality makes it easier to implement a program at many locations, especially when training and a standard program curriculum are available.

Tanya Tucker, far left, of ASTC works with staff from other programs at the first convening

> Growing up, I would go from [illegible] museum, where you have a bunch of white upper class people, to the projects and ghettos where I lived. It was such a big transition between those two points. And what I learned from the museum, I would take back and talk about to some of the people in my neighborhood. I don't know if I made a direct change in my neighborhood, but I think I did — a number of people got more community oriented.
>
> — *Nestor Ortiz, YouthALIVE! staff, Lowry Park Zoo, and former program participant*

Challenges

Business Partnerships

If *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* is to help young people leverage their museum experience into work in the private sector, each program will need strong partnerships with local businesses. Most sites have been working hard to accomplish this goal, but the need remains for a focused, concerted effort to help each site develop its capacity. At the national level, ASTC formed a Business Advisory Board, which held its first meeting in 1998. This group will help ASTC develop proactive strategies to help sites establish relationships with businesses.

> We were very naive going into creating business partnerships. We knew nothing. We left it blurry and open about what the relationship could be, when we should have determined up front what it needed to be.
>
> — *Tanya Tucker, former YouthALIVE! in the Workplace Program Manager*

Systemic Influence

*Youth*ALIVE! *In the Workplace* also faces the challenge of building closer ties with public schools in order to broaden its impact. The program has shown that science and technology centers are powerful incubators of work-based learning. Deeper impact will be felt when the pedagogy and insights of programs like *Youth*ALIVE! *in the Workplace* begin to influence the way schools teach science and math and deliver career exploration activities.

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Project Partner	Role
10 science and technology centers	*Pilot sites to demonstrate and test program*
YouthALIVE! network of 52 centers	*Sites that implement some aspect of YouthALIVE! in the Workplace*
Local community-based organizations and schools	*Participant recruiting*
Local businesses	*Program support*

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Chugachmiut

Anchorage, AK

We are all family here. Everybody helps each other out — you can't get in too much trouble.

— Angela Totemoff, program participant

As a result of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, several regional nonprofit health and human service provider agencies were established to serve Alaska's Native communities. In the Chugach region of Alaska — the Kenai Peninsula and its environs, Chugachmiut is the organization that serves seven Native communities: Valdez, Cordova, Seward, Tititlek, Chega Bay, Port Graham, and Nanwalek. The majority of villages are accessible only by air — small, single engine planes that, in the absence of radar, can land only in good weather. The geographic isolation of these communities is both part of the beauty of the region and the main challenge in connecting young people to economic options.

Alaska natives still in villages face a tough bind. Many care deeply about place, culture, history, but cannot sustain a livelihood in their native villages. The majority of these villages maintained a traditional, subsistence way of life based on fishing until just a few decades ago, when it was compromised by myriad of external forces. The youth represent to their parents almost a symbolic hope; if they can stay at home and continue to live in the village, then perhaps the traditional ways of life can continue. For young people, however, the draw to a fuller range of career options away from their villages is strong.

Struck by the unique tensions faced by young people, Chugachmiut's Employment and Training Division set out to increase its direct work with young people from these seven villages. Support from The Hitachi Foundation enabled Chugachmiut — an organization concerned primarily with the delivery of health services — to embark on this new path of working directly with youth on education and career issues. While other programs in the Partnerships Initiative had a single model they set out to refine and spread, Chugachmiut threw a wider net. In the absence of efforts to connect Native youth in this region to postsecondary options and careers, Chugachmiut staff decided to test a number of approaches simultaneously to determine what would be most effective.

Overview

Hitachi funding enabled Chugachmiut to expand and deepen its work with the region's youth by: holding career fairs within several villages; providing individualized and small group career and academic counseling and development activities; and sponsoring youth leadership development retreats.

To high schools in the "lower 48," a career fair is old hat — a basic school-to-work strategy. For a Native village accessible only by small

> Networks are vital to reaffirm practitioner's beliefs, to reinforce that others share the same issues and challenges and frustrations, to learn new approaches, new solutions, to offer new perspectives.
>
> — *Rose Ellis, program staff*

Alaska bush planes, a career fair is a feat of significant logistical planning that requires a unique level of commitment on the part of employers and schools and detailed planning on the part of Chugachmiut. Career fairs have offered a powerful way of meeting Chugachmiut's goal of exposing young people to career options. Through a career fair held in the village of Port Graham, young people met representatives of a number of regional employers and postsecondary institutions, including the Federal Aeronautics Administration, the Coast Guard, Alaska Vocational Technical School, and others.

While career fairs go a long way toward meeting Chugachmiut's goal of exposing young people to their options, the employment and training staff also uses individualized career and academic counseling and development to address the unique challenges and guidance needs of their participants. Part of the problem is geography, and part of it is culture: school-age Native youth face types of isolation unlike youth in the lower 48 or even in Alaska's urban areas. In purely Native villages, kids can attend schools through eighth or tenth grades. Schools are two-room schoolhouses, with elementary-age students in one room and older youth in another. Some villages are too small to justify having a high school themselves, and young people have to attend high school in other cities. In larger villages, Native youth attend regular high schools and are a distinct minority. The history of Native people in relationship to formal education is a painful one, given that their culture was denied for so many years, and young people face an internal struggle with whether and how much to identify with their Native heritage.

Chugachmiut staff and youth at the first convening

One-on-One guidance and counseling about school and career options allows Chugachmiut staff to assess and work with each young person's particular situation. Using AKCIS (Alaska Career Information Systems) software as a tool to help young people think about their interests, skills, and goals, the coordinator works with youth to inventory the skills they enjoy using. These skills are then matched with careers that make use of them, offering a starting point for conversations about career options. In addition, the Career Development Center, located at Chugachmiut's offices, is available to youth and adults at anytime. Here, the two staff of the Employment and Training Division (the E&T staff) keep current information about scholarships, internships, and job opportunities. Career exploration software is also available to provide some guidance about career options.

To help young people develop the level of

> At first all the responsibility was hard. All the paperwork and talking in front of groups was hard and, I thought, stupid. [I learned] I am a pretty good writer, and I can give pretty good oral presentations, and that challenges are not as hard as they seem at first. [Chugachmiut] helped point me in the direction I wanted to go.
>
> *Angela Tatemott, program participant*

self-awareness and confidence necessary to make good decisions about these complicated education and career choices. Chugachmiut created its Youth Leadership Development program. For young Native people who are grappling with tensions of loyalty to family and community that feel in opposition to their own futures, these qualities are even more important. In partnership with the Youth Action Coordinator at Chugachmiut (a position that existed prior to THF funding), the E&T staff organized an annual summer leadership retreat.

Two to three young people between the ages of 14 and 18 from each village attend the retreat. The young people are exposed to an urban area, make site visits to universities, hear from Alaska Natives with varied and significant careers, and reflect on and set career goals. Participants leave these gatherings with new perspectives on their own strengths and talents, and how these might be applied to a career. Moreover, they develop a bond with peers with whom they can discuss future dreams.

Chugachmiut, with its strategy of testing a number of approaches for effectiveness, did not have a set of quantifiable outcomes established on the front end of this experiment. Its goal was to serve as a trusted broker between schools, employers, colleges, and young people. It has created an understanding on the part of Native elders, tribal leaders, and parents about the importance of exposing their youth to options, creating a strong demand for this work to continue.

> We try to offer an insight and the tools necessary for the young person to "make it" and feel successful. By combining our efforts with those of the districts, other community organizations, and Native Corporations, we are starting to bridge the gap.
>
> *Gabriel Knapkoff, program staff*

Lessons

Filling the Gap

Exposing Native youth to options is essential. No one was doing this before Chugachmiut, and the organization found a huge need for direct, one-on-one contact between Native advocates who are knowledgeable about the world of work and Native youth.

Finding Allies

Partnering with schools as an outside agency requires finding the right ally, school by school. This person has been different in each school with which Chugachmiut has worked — sometimes a counselor, sometimes a principal, sometimes a superintendent. There is no simple formula that works with each institution.

Building Trust

Chugachmiut learned to walk a fine line between reinforcing a Native commitment to place and community while giving young people information about broader options available to them. Creating meaningful dialog with community leaders about the future of young people requires a slow process of trust building. A sincere commitment to helping youth develop and a commitment to the long-term future of Native communities themselves must underpin the process.

Challenges

Humbling Geography and Logistics

Being a "broker" for information and services in seven villages is not easy. The education and training staff coordinates programs with four school districts, local elementary schools, seven Village Councils, seven Village Corporations, numerous state and federal agencies, and private businesses, making for a complex juggling act.

Two-Way Partnerships

Chugachmiut operates mainly as a "service" agency, so local leaders have grown to expect from Chugachmiut and other government-funded agencies a one-way approach — "an agency delivers something to me, and I receive it." Shifting the expectations in these relationships from service to proactive collaboration is an ongoing challenge.

Respecting Tradition, Acknowledging Opportunity

As Native people, the staff of Chugachmiut is deeply familiar with the double bind facing communities: lose your youth and you lose the future of the community. But keeping your youth home without work skills and lacking a vision of the community's future also threatens the community. Finding an honest way to support the full development of Native youth and to respect the community's stake in its youth is essential.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
Village Councils	*Support and connections to youth and families*
School Districts	*Connections to youth*
Employers	*Career information to youth*
Community Colleges and Universities	*Connecting youth to postsecondary opportunities*

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Cornerstones Community Partnerships

Santa Fe, NM

New Mexico's stunning landscape is dotted with small, old, even ancient Latino and Indian communities. These communities hold their residents with their culture and history, but most offer limited career options to young people. Cornerstones Community Partnerships strives to overcome this deficit by improving the education and training opportunities for young people. With its roots in Zuni Pueblo and the town of Doña Ana, Cornerstones works at the intersection of youth development and community development. In this program, teenagers and young adults rebuild culturally significant historic buildings and community landmarks.

Overview

Cornerstones works with Native American and Latino youth. It has a special focus on those who have not completed high school and those at risk of dropping out, including gang members and post-adjudicated youth.

> If a kid doesn't fit into the standard system, if they're a square peg and school is a round hole, then they're out. And what are the other options they have? If a community can't serve all the kids — no matter what their needs are — it is a systemic problem.
>
> *Beth Johnson, past executive director, Cornerstones*

Regardless of their educational achievement, all youth in the target population have limited labor market exposure and limited workplace skills. The program combines hands-on work focused on building restoration projects with GED, community college, and alternative high school instruction to help participants complete their educations. Through the program, participants gain experience and valuable skills in the construction industry while the communities themselves are renewed as structures symbolic of their history find new life.

Cornerstones pioneered its youth work at two sites in rural New Mexico: Zuni Pueblo, in Northwest New Mexico and Doña Ana, in Southern New Mexico. At Zuni Pueblo, Cornerstones brought about the reopening of the historic stone quarry and employed two of the last remaining Zuni quarrymen as mentors for participants seeking to develop masonry skills. At Doña Ana, young people restored Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria, the oldest church in southern New Mexico. The program there has evolved to include training in several fields related to construction and historic preservation. One hundred and forty young people have received training in the Zuni program, as have 130 youth at Doña Ana. Many participants have successfully completed high

> Providing confidence is the key to the difference between somebody who instructs and somebody who educates. I'd been teaching in higher education for 28 years, and I just started to teach on the Acoma reservation. I don't really see very much difference in my approach, which is to try to recognize in the people I'm teaching what is in them, and to hold up a mirror, and to help them recognize it. It's providing the ability for each individual to become liberated through confidence-building.
>
> *Dennis Playdon, program staff*

school or their GEDs, and several participants have become program crew leaders and supervisors.

Cornerstones has built several strong partnerships in its efforts to provide further training and education opportunities to participants. As a spin-off from Doña Ana, participants in the Cornerstones program worked under contract with the New Mexico State Department of Monuments to stabilize ruins at a historic Civil War military camp. Other students at Doña Ana worked with the County Planning Department researching deeds, records, and historic documentation related to the sites being restored. And the program at Doña Ana has turned a traditional Southwestern building material into a fundraising tool: Cornerstones processes and sells its own lime putty to raise money for restoration efforts. At Zuni, a collaboration between Cornerstones and the National Park Service enabled program participants to participate in ruins stabilization efforts at Chaco Canyon.

The success of Cornerstones has opened new opportunities for program expansion. The community of Socorro, Texas, has approached Cornerstones hoping to build a youth training and mentorship program that would help preserve the town's historic church. Cornerstones has also been invited into the community of Acoma, New Mexico, to develop a youth training project involving traditional architecture and traditional land use systems.

Cornerstones youth and staff at one of their job sites

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Community Assets

Cornerstones has shown that successful youth development programs can be developed in economically distressed rural areas using the natural assets that communities possess — history, culture, and environment — as a basis for skill development and enterprise development.

Leveraging Partnerships

In developing its program, Cornerstones has successfully used the power of partnerships as a strategic tool. By connecting community assets with outside philanthropic and public resources, Cornerstones has enabled the creation of youth development programs that individual communities would be hard-pressed to develop alone. As a statewide intermediary, it has been skillful at targeting opportunities to expand its program beyond Northern New Mexico, positioning it for replication statewide and beyond.

> Being rooted in place is such a critical thing in our culture. That's why the land is so important to what we do, that's why we build with earth, and plaster with earth. You are totally integrated in your place, in where you are.
>
> *Sam Baca, program staff*

Engineering Success for Youth

Cornerstones illustrates that young people will grow when they receive deep mentoring by caring adults, both to convey technical skills and to provide personal guidance and direction; when they are given significant, real world challenges in a meaningful work environment and are equipped with the skills to perform that work well; and when they have opportunities to develop leadership capacities as crew leaders, supervisors, and staff.

> I was baptized in this church. By working on the church, the community has been brought together. Many of the program participants are from Dona Ana. For a lot of them it has given them a sense of pride and self-esteem. Now the kids can know, when people come to see the church, that they can have a sense of place in the history of the community.
>
> *Program alumnus and project supervisor*

Start Small, Grow Strong: Cornerstones also illustrates the wisdom of starting a program small, perfecting the model, extracting the elements that work, and then adapting these elements to a succession of different communities and cultures. This strategy works far better than trying to cover too much ground at the outset or staying confined to a single community, thereby losing the opportunity for broader impact.

Alternative Funding Sources

Cornerstones has also used its early successes as a foundation upon which to build. The program has been creative in accessing nontraditional public funding streams, such as the New Mexico Department of Labor, by showing it can perform value-adding work in exchange for grant money.

Challenges

Funding the Overhead

Despite its successes in Zuni and Doña Ana and opportunities for expansion, Cornerstones has a difficult time raising the money necessary for sustaining and expanding its local partnerships. While Cornerstones' work in the field has been commended by the state and federal governments — including a visit from Hillary Rodham Clinton to the Acoma Pueblo site in 1999 — funding the administrative work for growing local partnerships is an extremely difficult task.

School Partnerships

Another challenge facing the program is developing stronger links with the public schools in its communities, both to identify potential participants and to strengthen the connection between work-site and classroom learning. The schools are equally pressured by tight budgets and limited resources, putting the burden on Cornerstones to work toward creative partnering strategies.

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Project Partner	Role
Cornell University and Universities of New Mexico and Pennsylvania	*Provide field studios and internships*
New Mexico Department of Labor, JTPA	*Provide training stipends for participating youth trainees*
New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps	*Provides training stipends for participating youth*
New Mexico State Historic Preservation Division	*Provides technical consultation and validation of preservation work*
Tribal and other local governments	*Provide primary sponsorship and ownership of Cornerstones-assisted projects*

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Forward in the Fifth, Student Leadership Initiative Program and EDGE Program

Berea, KY

We know that students have the creativity and energy to change their communities. This is a chance for them to prove it.

— *Andy Beichler, former program staff, Forward in the Fifth*

Southeastern Kentucky is known for its beautiful mountain scenery. But it is also known for its reliance on the declining coal-mining industry and for its many low-income, geographically isolated communities. Committed to communities where generations of their families have lived, people have withstood the long-term lack of opportunity. As in many such areas, the public schools struggle to meet their basic education objectives, but they are confounded by limited resources and a historic pattern of low educational attainment. Those young people who do persevere through high school are often faced with leaving Southeastern Kentucky as the only avenue to a career and future success.

Forward in the Fifth (FIF) is an educational advocacy organization that serves 55 Kentucky school systems in 39 southern and eastern counties. The organization's local, volunteer-led affiliates advocate for local public schools and provide extra human or financial resources directly to teachers and the schools. When the school-to-work movement began nationally, FIF recognized the need of some of its schools for direct guidance on connecting young people to work, particularly given the challenges of a rural economy with few large employers.

Support from The Hitachi Foundation allowed FIF to forge a partnership to pilot and then spread two programs, the Student Leadership Initiative Program (SLIP) and Educational Designs that Generate Excellence (EDGE). Both of the programs are rooted in research showing that young people are less likely to drop out when they have connections to school through extracurricular activities.

Overview

Forward in the Fifth designed SLIP to reduce the dropout rate of students in the transition from eighth to ninth grades and to create a positive connection for students with their community. The program also enhances the employability of young people by cultivating a range of leadership skills, including personal understanding, goal-setting and decision-making, teamwork, and project development and management. Students select a service project that offers a chance to practice leadership skills while making a tangible improvement in the community.

In designing the program, Forward in the Fifth drew on the Brushy Fork Institute, a successful leadership development model for

> I really appreciated it at the start when Hitachi came out and said "No matter what happens, if we learn from it then this won't be a failure." That really freed me up to think in terms of experimental programming and really working on things I believe in. I feel a real strong sense of not a funder fundee relationship but of a partnership relationship.
>
> — *Andy Beichler, program staff*

adults in Appalachia. FIF then made SLIP available to local affiliates as a packaged curriculum, providing technical assistance and training during implementation of the program.

Students in SLIP meet weekly after school throughout the school year. With an analysis of community assets and challenges in hand, they select an issue to address. They learn more about the issue and how they might help. Then they develop and implement their service project. As a result of SLIP, students have cleaned up sections of their communities, supported disaster preparedness efforts, raised money for families burned out of their homes, and more.

> Forward in the Fifth had us working on all this stuff so that we'd be able to help people, to be leaders. The reason I stay in the program is because I enjoy helping people. I see that Jackson County needs a lot of help. And Forward in the Fifth teaches how to help out, how to get educated. Not many people think Jackson County has educated kids. It can help other people realize that there are educated kids here, and that they work hard.
>
> — *Patrick Tamayo, program participant*

Ten local affiliates partnered with Forward in the Fifth to seed SLIP in schools in their region. Today, SLIP is strongly institutionalized in three of the four original pilot counties, and FIF is working with the six newer sites to achieve that high level of commitment. So far, almost 450 students across the region have participated in SLIP.

A summer variation of the program, Summer SLIP, extends the involvement for some SLIP participants and aims to ease the transition between middle and high school. Initially, FIF piloted this weeklong program to deepen leadership skills for interested SLIP graduates. Later, they opened it up to students from throughout the region and found great value in cross-regional connections. In addition, the program is held on the campus of Berea College and exposes participants to the idea of postsecondary education.

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FIF took a different approach to the work of helping young people link to the economy, forming the Student Entrepreneurship Advisory Committee to develop a strategy to meet this goal. The Committee represented a strong partnership of community development organizations, the area Empowerment Zone, high school and college educators, and private sector people. This group wanted to launch an entrepreneurship training program and reviewed many model programs. In the end, they selected Educational Designs That Generate Excellence (EDGE), a program distributed by Kidsworking, a national youth entrepreneurship organization.

EDGE targets students in ninth and tenth grades, ideally those who participated in SLIP at their local middle school. Participating schools establish an "Entrepreneurship Club," and the program is run by at least one lead facilitator — a teacher at the school or an outside resource person with entrepreneurship and education skills. The EDGE curriculum is 50 hours of active learning spanning two school semesters, and students essentially plan and start a small business over the course of their learning.

With business plan in hand, students have access to "capital," $50 grants to cover start-up costs. EDGE students have tested a range of business ideas, including personalized buttons, jewelry, popcorn, and snow cones. In one county, the EDGE instructor set up marketing opportunities for student businesses at baseball games and through a school-wide trade fair. At the end of the year, students close out their businesses and examine profit and loss, so they understand a full business cycle.

> In the program, we're learning how to be leaders. We're learning how to make money without living off the county.
>
> *Roxann Ray, program participant*

Forward in the Fifth sees itself as a catalyst for good programs and is not wed to a single way for those programs to take hold, allowing some interesting adaptations of EDGE to occur. One school applied EDGE's lessons to a desktop publishing class, focusing on that as the business. In another county, a community action team is the sponsoring group behind the EDGE curriculum, and volunteers supervise the program.

Both SLIP and EDGE reach kids who would not likely otherwise engage in traditional extracurricular activities. Participating students speak to the importance of finding a connection to their school community and to learning as a result of these programs. For schools, SLIP and EDGE have provided a vehicle to connect them with community-based efforts, providing interesting partnerships with the chance for ongoing connections.

Lessons

Entrepreneurship — Goal and Tool

> Jackson County has some really pretty areas. I'm not going to move out.
>
> *— Patrick Tamayo, program participant*

In a region like Eastern Kentucky that has relied on extractive industries with outside ownership, a culture of entrepreneurship can result in economic self-sufficiency, and service learning and entrepreneurship training can be powerful pieces of that process. In rural counties with few significant employers, entrepreneurship also can provide otherwise unavailable work experience.

Creatively Decreasing Overhead

EDGE is somewhat expensive to operate; the costs of curricula materials and the $50 business investment makes the per-student cost about $100. As it prepares for EDGE's long-term success, FIF is creating a small "revolving loan fund" to provide the $50 capital investments made in student businesses. Students would borrow and re-pay their start-up funds, helping to make that part of the program financially self-sustaining.

Challenges

Creating Demand

FIF brought in the EDGE program without local, school, or community-level interest on the front end, making it a hard sell. It is not an impossibility, as they proved in three communities, but EDGE is a novel program that requires specialized skills to teach. It will be difficult to reach a larger scale without devoting more intensive staff time to cultivating demand for it.

Critical Mass

Reaching scale is the perpetual challenge for Forward in the Fifth's efforts to spread good programs. Setbacks are inevitable. One of the strongest EDGE programs dissolved when the one committed teacher left and the school gave her school-to-work duties to another already overloaded teacher. In another county, a couple that championed the program moved out of the area, taking the local commitment to making the program happen with them.

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Project Partner	Role
Forward in the Fifth local affiliates	*Local sponsors and supporters of programs*
CBOs and businesses	*Volunteer teachers or leaders of entrepreneurship and leadership programs; advisors to FIF for overall strategy*
School districts	*Sponsors of EDGE program*

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Girls, Inc., Eureka

San Leandro, CA

They sent me on a wilderness expedition for a month in the backcountry. When I got back, it was the first time I ever looked at Oakland differently. It wasn't that Oakland had gotten worse, it was that I hadn't had anything to compare it to; it was all that I knew. It is all about exposure.

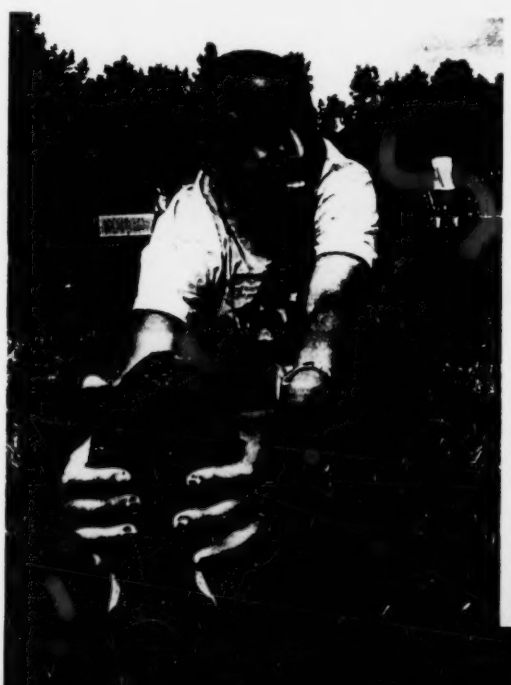
— *Stephanie Garcia, program alumna and volunteer tutor*

A 1993 U.S. Department of Education study found that blacks and Latinos accounted for only four percent of the scientists and engineers in the United States. Furthermore, women accounted for only 11 percent. In spite of these lopsided statistics, young minority women are rarely pushed to excel in traditionally male-dominated areas such as math, science, and engineering.

The Eureka Teen Achievement Program encourages teenage girls to enroll in high school science, math, and technology classes and pursue careers in these fields. They build girls' confidence through hands-on activities in these subjects and sports. Eureka began in 1993 at five sites nationwide, including San Leandro, California, with support from the National Science Foundation. It was modeled after a program developed at Brooklyn College Women's Center in 1986 that encouraged underrepresented women to participate in math and science. San Leandro's program is operated by the Alameda County, California, affiliate of Girls, Inc., a national organization dedicated to inspiring all girls to be *Strong, Smart, and Bold.*[3]

Because most participants remain in the program for four years, Eureka is able to provide steadfast guidance that participants are able to use in their high school and college education and, ultimately, in their careers. The program provides young women with a fun and constructive way to spend their time away from school, which is not available elsewhere in the community. Eureka also does the much-needed work of self-esteem improvement, with the belief that when girls feel good about themselves, they will excel in whatever they put their minds to.

The program targets a specific, and oft-forgotten, group of girls — not necessarily the most troubled kids, nor most gifted, but those students who truly need guidance to excel and who would drift without a program like Eureka. Seventy-four percent of the girls are from families of color, primarily African American or Latina. Fifty-two percent are single-parent families, mostly headed by women. Through classes, field trips, workshops, and internships, Eureka helps to motivate these young women onto a path to success.



Stephanie Garcia, Girls, Inc., program alumna, volunteer tutor, and college student

Overview

Girls enter the Eureka program at age 12 or 13 and spend their first two years in the summer program on the Mills College campus, where they engage in intensive academic, athletics, and educational enrichment field trips for four weeks. Girls participate in hands-on activities in science, math, architecture, computers, and sports, and they learn about future ways to apply their new skills. In this college setting, girls also get a taste of the possibilities that higher education offers.

> At college, even among people of color, most of them are from middle class families and have college educated parents. Of the girls in the program, just five percent had parents with even some college education.
>
> — *Stephanie Garcia, program alumna and volunteer tutor*

Eureka is also about positive attitude development. In their first year, girls build their self-esteem living up to the program's mottoes, "You Can Do It" and "Strong, Smart, and Bold." Consequently, they learn that they are capable of achieving anything, including excelling in traditionally male-dominated fields and activities. During the school year, the summer program is reinforced with Saturday sessions several times a month and voluntary tutoring sessions for extra help in math. In the second year, students engage in more sophisticated academic endeavors, including designing their own web pages, getting an introduction to physics, and learning how to balance a checkbook.

In the third and fourth years of the program, participants apply what they have learned in their first two summer sessions through a five-week paid summer internship. Seven participants intern as Eureka counselors with the first- and second-year students. In shifting their role from student to peer leader, girls have the opportunity to be role models, to acquire a greater sense of responsibility and maturity, and to teach others what they have learned. The remaining students intern in Alameda County at government agencies, doctors' offices, laboratories, veterinary clinics, and technology firms, where they shadow a mentor — preferably a woman — to better understand the demands and intricacies of the job.

In undertaking these career internships, girls gain more than an understanding of the connections between academics and careers. They learn specialized concrete skills that they will likely be able to apply when they enter the workforce. The girls also gain an appreciation for themselves, their accomplishments, professional women, and the working world as a whole.

> I don't think you can really measure the success in numbers; it's quality versus quantity. If the organization is constantly evaluating and getting feedback from the members they serve, that's where they'll see the changes.
>
> — *Stephanie Garcia, program alumna and volunteer tutor*

Before the internship, students participate in a four-day seminar on basic

Eureka participants and staff working together on academics

programs serves as a way to create links between academic and work-related skills. During the school year, girls get a true taste of the college experience through overnight trips to local college campuses.

Eureka has already had a hand in fostering academic success and instilling positive, career-minded attitudes in teen girls. A 1997 evaluation report found that 100 percent of the participants were planning to attend college, and 75 percent already knew what their major would be. Graduates of the program had a 3.31 overall grade point average in high school.

Since its inception, the Eureka program has expanded and improved. Most notably, the number and quality of off-job placements for third- and fourth-year students have increased and the year-round support provided for Eureka participants has become more effective. In 1998 the program continued this growth with expanded after-school tutoring and enhanced pre-internship computer and job training. Forty-one students participated in the internship program in the summer of 1998, compared with 30 in 1996.

employment skills. During the internship period, the girls meet four times for computer workshops. In 1999, a weekly Scholastic Aptitude Test Prep Course was added to Eureka's summer schedule. Each of these

Lessons

Dual Impact

Eureka has concrete impact — girls are selecting difficult math and science classes in high school. It also has less measurable impacts — girls are gaining the conviction to pursue ambitious college and career plans. Together, these two components make it more likely that Eureka participants will achieve future success.

Teaching Parents

Parental participation is also central to ensuring the student's participation and success in the program. In response to low parent participation in the program, Eureka initiated a mandatory parent orientation in 1997 to acquaint parents with details of the program and provide them with ways to support their daughters in math and science.

Challenges

Personalization vs. Growth

Through the years, Eureka has increased its capacity to serve more young women while also increasing its retention rate. To continue to be effective, Eureka is addressing the two major challenges presented by this growth: identifying additional quality internship opportunities while continuing to maintain one-on-one relationships with participants.

> Even though our program is a local unit of a national program, we don't find many other professionals locally or in other units of the national program who can offer valuable peer-to-peer learning and reflection opportunities.
>
> — *Ayana McIntosh, former program staff, Eureka*

Compensating for External Factors

Eureka also wants to increase girls' enrollment in advanced high school math and science classes. The program has already set specific goals, including:

- 80 percent of Eurekans in the eleventh grade will have taken or will be taking geometry;
- 95 percent of Eurekans will have taken three years of science by the end of the eleventh grade; and
- 50 percent of 8th grade Eurekans will be enrolled in algebra classes.

However, limited school resources — a factor outside Eureka's control — often prevent students from taking certain classes. Girls, Inc., aims to intensify case management and strengthen relationships with the school system and its personnel to facilitate meeting these goals.

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Project Partner	Role
Employers	*Internship positions*
Mills College	*Summer program facilities*
School Districts	*Connection for recruiting participants and ongoing troubleshooting to ensure endeavor's success*

Greater Detroit One to One

Detroit, MI

The Detroit public schools are among the most instructionally and economically challenged in the country. Some students go without books and others go without permanent teachers for an entire year. Nearly 60 percent of students in the Detroit Public Schools drop out between kindergarten and twelfth grade, and fewer than five percent of high school graduates go on to postsecondary education within six months of graduation. Inner-city youth who graduate from high school are usually inadequately prepared for a job: Detroit will have a projected 200,000 new jobs in the year 2000, and only 10,000 of its high school graduates may be qualified to fill them.

> I want to learn as much as I can about as many careers as I possibly can. I learned from Career Mentor Volunteers that you have to have good grades in high school to get into a good college, and while in college, you have to maintain a good grade point average to become a doctor. This has encouraged me to stay in school and improve my grades. I know that this summer will be even better, because each time I go out, I learn more and my confidence in myself grows stronger.
>
> *Christopher Baker, program participant*

Greater Detroit One to One has two main goals — to reduce the dropout rate and to endow students with the skills to find lucrative careers after graduation. One to One is working to assure that young people in the Detroit Public School System are informed about their career options and what it takes to prepare for those careers.

One to One matches students with multiple mentors in the community to give them exposure to different career options. Many students lack basic information about careers in the local economy and live in social isolation from strong role models. In addition to the mentoring program, school-based One to One staff provides students with career assessment and guidance services to give them even more direction about career options.

Overview

Detroit One to One draws on a vast pool of community resources to help improve and focus students' educational endeavors. At present, Greater Detroit One to One has developed "prototype" programs to serve two elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools in the city, with plans to branch out to other schools in the future as the prototypes are refined. Additionally, they are testing a more comprehensive career-readiness program with students in Spain Middle School and Finney High School. The

program is funded by The Hitachi Foundation, 3M, and United Way.

In the program, One to One staff first survey students about their family background, school and extracurricular interests, career goals, and mental and physical health. They do this to identify what critical career needs are not being met in the schools, as well as to find each student's specific interests. One to One then recruits adult volunteer career mentors — 1,500 to date — from business, labor, government, and professional organizations in the community in the early spring.

> CBOs are in a very unique position now to knit together all the elements of the community: corporate America, government, families, schools.
>
> *Carole Hall, Detroit One to One executive director*

From the middle of June until the beginning of August, each student meets with up to twenty of these mentors based on the student's career interests. Mentors meet in their work environment one-on-one with the student for at least an hour. At the job site, students conduct a 45-minute interview, asking each mentor preset questions about the requirements of their job and how they got to their position. The Greater Detroit One to One newsletter publishes students' accounts of these interviews to provide the information to as many participants as possible and to strengthen students' writing skills.

Students are informed about the career-mentoring aspect of the program through school assemblies and frequent mailings throughout the year. When summer comes they are motivated and excited about their interviews. The program includes parents by inviting them to a meeting to discuss questions about One to One and its role in the schools.

Program staff members also meet with school counselors, social workers, and psychologists to determine the most-at-risk

David Dodson of MDC and Carole Hall of Detroit One to One confer at the first convening

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students and to share One to One's survey findings to facilitate targeting the areas in which students need the most help. Through the surveys, One to One has identified profound problems students are having, such as being unable to understand their teachers, having outdated books, and feeling wholly deficient in math, science, and English. One to One staff regularly shares the feedback with school personnel and advocates action to overcome barriers to learning. The survey specifically addresses common health problems with high school students including drugs, obesity, and sexually transmitted diseases to promote better learning through healthier living.

One to One staff estimates many effects of the program will not emerge until the five-year mark, when the first group of participants is college- and job-ready. Initial assessments do show that the program is meeting its goal of cutting down the high school dropout rate. At present, students are most at risk for dropping out in the ninth grade: 50 to 60 percent of students in the Detroit Public School System leave school at this time. In its pilot program, Greater Detroit One to One provided 99 eighth-grade students with One to One mentoring experiences; by the time these students reached the tenth grade, only one had left school.

By 2004, One to One hopes public schools system-wide will have absorbed and begun to apply the processes piloted by the program. Its specific long-term objective is to institutionalize a career mentorship process within the on-going student services provided in every Detroit public school.

Lessons

Mentor Commitments

Many mentoring programs struggle with low participation by volunteer career mentors, but high volunteer numbers is a hallmark of One to One. Ninety percent of the mentors asked to participate in the program have agreed, 1,500 in all. One to One's theory on volunteerism is that busy adults find it easier to commit to a mentoring role when the time requirements are clear and limited. In the case of One to One, the commitment is a simple interview.

> In partnerships, corporate time and corporate in-kind and technical assistance can be as valuable as corporate funding.
>
> *Carole Hall, executive director*

Credibility in Partnering

One to One has created a collaborative infrastructure among schools and mentors and employers that is crucial to its ability to succeed. By forging partnerships between One to One and mentor volunteers at Detroit Edison, Renaissance Hospital and Medical Centers, 100 Black Men, and several universities the program has ensured a strong base of community support.

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Challenges

Partners in Crisis

Administrative turnover, budget uncertainty, and political volatility within the Detroit Public School System make it hard for One to One to sustain relationships with its partner schools. The organization also struggles with the question of how to achieve impact and staying power as a small program operating in a large system that is in the throes of deep, systemic confusion.

Growing Public Support

The program continues working to garner strong support of the school administrators and the parents. Greater Detroit One to One is working to garner more public support by disseminating findings from their on-going student evaluations through a public information campaign. The challenge is to speak the truth about students' needs and the program's benefits in a way that captures the attention and imagination of people already overwhelmed with a beleaguered school system.

Contact Information

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Greater Detroit One to One
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Project Partner	Role
Detroit Public Schools	*Assessing and meeting student needs; recruiting*
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	*Career mentors*
Local businesses	*Career mentors*

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Greater Washington Urban League

Washington, DC

Southeast Washington, DC, is an economically challenged and physically isolated section of the city. There are few places of employment and it is not extensively served by the city's public transportation network. While only a short distance away from the city's thriving tourist district, the area is known mostly for its high crime rate and deteriorating infrastructure. The community's schools are also suffering the impact of turmoil in the greater DC public school system, complicating even the delivery of basic services. These factors create a difficult situation for young people, limiting their ability to plan and prepare for a future in the mainstream economy.

Greater Washington Urban League, in partnership with the DC Schools, Junior Achievement, and area senior citizens, is developing a prototype program for middle and high school-age youth in Southeast Washington to strengthen the linkages between education and economic opportunity. The program, which integrates tutoring and mentoring by senior citizens, entrepreneurship training, internships, and community service, will give young people an academic and experiential foundation for success in the workplace and in life after high school.

Overview

The prototype program serves students from the P.R. Harris Education Center (K-9) and from Johnson Senior High School, both located in Southeast Washington. Program staff work with school staff to recruit students to participate in the yearlong program. Participants do have the option to continue in the program on a year-to-year basis.

> We've found that getting school counselors to buy in to our programs is key; a particular teacher will only have the student for a year, but a counselor will have a responsibility to them the whole time the student is in that school. So we made friends with the counselors, so when we call them about our youngsters, they do the groundwork at the school to find out what the problem is. It takes time.
>
> — *Audrey Epperson, program staff*

In the tutoring/mentoring component of the program, youth meet on a weekly basis with their senior citizen mentors at one of two area senior centers. Seniors tutor students individually or in small groups. The program also includes time and opportunity for socializing and developing personal relationships, including holiday gatherings and field trips. This combination of weekly contact, academic reinforcement, and personal friendships allows

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mentors to be both positive role models and constant, engaged support for the participants.

In the entrepreneurial education and training part of the program, GWUL partnered with Junior Achievement to implement the Business and Economic Careers (BEC) program. Through BEC, the young people learn about the components of business ownership and operation and then put this new knowledge to practice by developing, managing, and then closing out a business venture. For example, one year's business venture involved selling a line of products at a National Urban League conference in Washington, DC, which required the youth to practice planning, organization, financing, procurement, customer service, sales, and cash management skills.

> GWUL looks at the youths' report card every period and considers grade improvements a measure of success — showing that tutoring plus mentoring is effective. It's on a one-on-one basis, when you can pay attention to them, when they really learn.
>
> — *Evans Moore, program staff*

The internship program provides career exposure and real-life work experience for many of GWUL's young people. While participants who are under 14 attend computer camp to develop their work-related skills, those who are 14 or older participate in either the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program or serve one-week internships in local federal agencies through the federal Office of Personnel Management's Internship Program.

The intergenerational program's community service component provides an opportunity for youth to develop a deeper understanding of their community and their responsibilities as members of that community while reinforcing their self-esteem. Students engage in a variety of activities throughout the year, such as assisting with activities at their mentors' senior center, reading to younger children, and participating in "Neighborhood Clean-Up Day." This community service also fulfills up to 25 hours per school year of the DC Public School's 100-hour requirement for high school graduation.

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Audrey Epperson, GWUL staff, at the first convening

Lessons

Alternative Mentors

In a time when adult volunteers and mentors are hard to come by, the Greater Washington Urban League has demonstrated that creativity can be the key to solving a problem. GWUL identified one of the main untapped human resources in its community — senior citizens — and is capitalizing on their wealth of experience, their civic-mindedness, and their availability to provide valuable mentoring and tutoring.

Partnering for Service Delivery

GWUL has also demonstrated how strategic partnering can increase comprehensiveness of services without overburdening program staff. Instead of developing its own entrepreneurship training program, GWUL has partnered with Junior Achievement, whose programs have been highly successful in motivating youth to see the benefits of participating in the mainstream economy.

Challenges

Working with Partners in Crisis

GWUL's progress in developing collaborative partnerships with the DC public schools has been hampered by the system's current turmoil, including severely limited resources and upheavals in school leadership. Gaining the support of principals necessary to make a community-based program a school priority under such conditions has proven difficult, creating a challenge to GWUL's efforts to fully implement the prototype program.

Leveraging Change

Expanding the program past the prototype level will require a successful demonstration, increased parental involvement and support, and strengthened roles for senior citizen mentors. These factors will have to be in place before the program can leverage change in the system by linking to the academic and career counseling function in the schools.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
DC Public Schools	*Recruiting*
Junior Achievement	*Entrepreneurship training*
Area churches	*Entrepreneurship opportunities*
National Urban League	*Entrepreneurship opportunities*
Office of Personnel Management	*Internship opportunities*
Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program	*Internship opportunities*
The Greater Southeast Community Hospital Wellness Centers	*Mentors; facilities*

Impact Services Corporation, Community Block Builders

Philadelphia, PA

When you work as a team, you understand each other better and do a better job. It takes time to learn and do things right.

— Chris Torres, program participant

During the 19th century, Philadelphia was known as the "workshop of the world." The Kensington neighborhood, two miles north of the Liberty Bell and along the Delaware River, was home to several major industries, including Schoenhut Toys and Stetson Hats. During the first half of the 20th century, however, employment in Kensington began to decline, and during the 1960s, the exodus of the middle class became complete. Today, police do battle with a $250 million drug trade in the neighborhood, and local residents fight their own daily battles with poverty.

In 1995, five teachers from Mastbaum High School, Kensington's vocational high school, proposed to purchase, renovate, and sell houses to provide real-life learning experiences for their students while improving the community's infrastructure. The School district's legal department rejected the idea, but the teachers stayed committed to replacing traditional vocational model building with projects of real consequence. They eventually partnered with Impact Services Corporation, a community-based nonprofit that focuses on human services, community services, and economic development. The result was Community Block Builders, an experiential learning and career development program for Mastbaum students.

Overview

Through building construction, renovation, and preservation projects, Community Block Builders aims to:

- engage students in learning activities that will prepare them for employment or college, while expanding the students' social skills and raising their aspirations;
- change the way that vocational education classes are taught, so that they are more experiential and better connected to real career issues; and
- create visible changes in the community through rehabilitated houses, offices, community facilities.

CBB recruits rising juniors from a range of Mastbaum's programs, including carpentry, cabinetmaking, architectural drafting, electricity, and electro-mechanical technology. The intensive program integrates academic and vocational education through:

- a summer of paid on-site construction activities, doing work for real-life clients;

- junior year concentration on integrated academic and shop work, including part-time paid work on-site with CBB and taking college admissions pretests;
- a second summer of white-collar employment along with college and career exploration; and
- senior year concentration on SATs and college or apprenticeship applications.

The summer programs and extended on-site workdays add 1,000 hours, the equivalent of one school year, to the students' time devoted to learning. Students earn thousands of dollars for their summer and after-school work, providing critical financial support for themselves and often their families.

The first summer together is intense. Over time, the program managers, who are experienced construction professionals paid by Impact, have cultivated an integrated approach to teaching and learning that builds technical skills and life skills. The on-the-job training goes beyond training typically offered in vocational shops. It provides depth on the trade itself and breadth on the range of construction careers available. It also emphasizes the life skills required to be an effective employee.

> The benefit of working with the school is the dual incentives. We found students can sometimes can be very turned on to and focus more on their academics if they realize they can get some form of academic credit for the learning that's taking place [on a job site], and this is the idea of experiential learning and of transference of skills. Using geometry at a job location, then being able to go back to school and do it on a test.
>
> — *Torben Jenk, program staff*

The program challenges students to apply their skills in ever more difficult and interdisciplinary tasks. What once seemed obscure or irrelevant to students became real and important: fractions are used to measure, cut, and install parts; geometry helps in the precise layout of materials; algebra helps solve structural and heat-loss calculations. Reading requires locating and comprehending information and then making decisions based on technical terms, graphic symbols, and charts. Interpersonal skills are tested and honed through work with student-teacher teams and subcontractors. Time is set aside to put lessons into a larger context. Examples include comparing job site productivity and its relationship to budget and billable items, researching the history of construction sites and the times in which they were built, and visiting other sites to place their work in context of the greater community.

> I started in Impact in my sophomore year. After a couple of years in construction and carpentry, wiring and dry wall, Torben said, "OK, you know all that. It's time for you to see what's in the business world." So I got a job with the engineering company, and it was a whole different experience. I had to wear dress clothes instead of a hard hat, it was a whole different environment for me. Without the program, my personality would be the same, but my knowledge wouldn't. I learned about business, how to speak better, how to make eye contact, to project my voice, that my opinion matters. I came a long way.
>
> — *Sonni Parker, program alumna and college student*

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CBB participants have restored and renovated historic homes, created classrooms and program spaces for local social service centers, renovated housing for low- and moderate-income homeowners, and created community parks. These visible, tangible results are icing on the cake, because the primary goal of expanding education and career options for young people is measured in other ways. CBB works with 20 students each year. These students make overall improvements in academic achievement, evidenced by higher grades and increased postsecondary enrollment — 50 percent of CBB participants go on to college, as compared to Mastbaum's average of 25 percent.

In addition, students gained strong work skills including technical skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, stronger work habits, interpersonal skills, and clearer career direction.

Lessons

Evaluation and Support

Community Block Builders did not evaluate students' academic and employment skill levels before designing the original training program. As a result, CBB had to adapt on-the-job training to focus more on academic support, whether reading comprehension, teaching fractions, or appropriate workplace behavior. By mastering the necessary skills on the job, students have developed a true sense of accomplishment, which has often become the incentive to pursue greater challenges.

> The most valuable resource we have to offer is who we know. It opens the doors for a lot of students. Our community isn't rich in businesses — most of the businesses have left. Just bringing people that we know to the job site and showing them what the students have to offer, they'll come back and say, 'I know this other project. Are you interested in doing this?' These are offers that will pay our bills, from people who are willing to give the students a chance.
>
> *Hillary Hertler, program staff*

Youth in the Impact program prepare a construction site

The Earlier, the Better

In the first year of the program, CBB recruited rising seniors, and the staff soon realized that this did not provide enough time to increase their academic skills before the SAT and college application deadlines. CBB now recruits rising juniors for the summer program, works with them intensively through their junior year and in an advisory role through their senior year.

Encourage Critical Thinking

Teaching methods on the job have evolved so that academic and vocational learning are inseparable. The Socratic method of teaching is used full force — answering questions with questions to encourage critical thinking. Staff has found ways to reinforce academic skills and to link tangible learning in construction with broader lessons about life or careers.

Challenges

Relationship Building

Building a strong working partnership between Impact and Mastbaum staff has been an ongoing challenge. The in-school staff assigned to CBB changed three times in three years. In addition, Philadelphia teachers and schools are regularly pilloried in the press, creating an atmosphere of protectiveness. These factors have made it difficult to establish the deep, trusting relationship necessary to a collaborative partnership.

Systemic Change

Fully integrating on-the-job learning and students' academic courses is a continuing challenge. Despite a great deal of effort, CBB has not been able to find or develop a model for linking the two. In part because of this, CBB staff focuses on spending maximum learning time with the students, with immediate positive results for students but leaving little opportunity to address the larger systemic problem.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
Mastbaum High School	*Identifying potential participants; integrating academic and on-the-job learning*
Individual businesses and agencies (e.g., Office of Housing and Community Development and the American Street Corridor Business Association)	*Employment opportunities during senior year*
Temple University Center for Research in Human Development	*Third-party evaluators*

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One to One Philadelphia, The Greater Philadelphia Mentoring Partnership *Philadelphia, PA*

I was a troubled child. [My high school program coordinator] kept after me. Sometimes she would sigh and say, 'I don't know what else to do with you!' but she wouldn't give up.

— *Kevin, program participant working at the Nehemiah Youth Mission*

Despite its historic colonial roots, Philadelphia was more of a major industrial center than a tourist attraction in the 1800s and early 1900s. As technology began to replace human labor and manufacturers moved south or overseas to take advantage of less expensive labor and lower taxes in the 1950s and 1960s, the city slowly began to lose not only jobs but also its traditional career infrastructure. Like many communities, new jobs in the office, retail, and business services sectors replaced many of those that had been lost, but the old job training system of the manufacturing economy — apprenticeship — no longer applies.

One to One Philadelphia's Greater Philadelphia Mentoring Partnership's goal is to connect young people to the work force and help them explore career options. The program is an affiliate of The National Mentoring Partnership, which is based in Washington, DC, and is committed to taking the power of mentoring to scale. With support from The Hitachi Foundation, One to One Philadelphia launched this effort to expand a set of mentoring activities and to forge a coherent system of support and connections to the workplace for Philadelphia's youth.

Shadowing Day, when ninth-grade students spend a day with an adult mentor in their workplace, is the first part of Philadelphia One to One's program implemented with The Foundation's support. The BEGIN (Business Education Goes Into Neighborhoods) program, which matches tenth-grade students and business owners in long-term relationships, is the second part.

Overview

On **Shadowing Day**, ninth-grade students from the School District of Philadelphia visit area workplaces to gain firsthand exposure to the everyday working world. "Shadowing" is an exercise where students are paired with employee mentors for a day to learn about a particular career; kids actually follow their mentor all day long, getting a real taste of the work world.

Each participating company commits to hosting five students and matching them with mentors. Students ready themselves for their visit by learning about the company and preparing a short biography to facilitate matches with mentors. On Shadowing Day, 3,000 young people are spread throughout Philadelphia learning more about careers,

their own interests, and their community. Shadowing Day culminates in an essay contest sponsored by two business partners. Students are invited to write an essay about what they learned, and the top 10 essays receive $100 prizes.

> I think one of the things that works best is when you have the teacher and the mentor together in the same room, coming to an accord on what the expectations are, what they mean by a rigorous activity. Some mentors think it's just about giving the students exposure. They'll have them fax and make copies, they won't give them real experiences, which is why teachers are sometimes resistant. You keep adding things to teachers' plates, but you never take anything away, and that's a big issue in getting buy-in.
>
> — *Pamela Wilcox, former program staff, One to One Philadelphia*

Leading up to this day, a committee that includes One to One, the Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Philadelphia School District, and businesspeople plans and markets the day's events. The list of participating companies includes hospitals, insurance firms, major accounting firms, as well as small businesses throughout the city. One to One staff serves as the point of contact for business partners. The School District recruits students. All high school ninth graders are invited to participate; local schools make the decision on whether or not to do so.

By the tenth grade, students in select schools can participate in **BEGIN (Business Education Goes Into Neighborhoods)**. Like Shadowing Day, BEGIN is a partnership of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, the School District of Philadelphia, and One to One. BEGIN focuses on connecting young people with business mentors close to home. Students are able to see that real, important work in their own neighborhood provides goods and services to their community and beyond. At a practical level, mentoring within the neighborhood alleviates transportation problems for the students.

BEGIN focuses on economically disadvantaged students with a "C" average — kids likely to fall through the cracks without some extra attention. Mentors with BEGIN make a bigger commitment than with Shadowing Day, spending two hours per week with their students at the worksite, during school months. They are committed adults who run dress shops, truck stops, printing businesses, and the like, and who are committed to improving the lives of young people. The Chamber of Commerce hosts a BEGIN Committee, which recruits mentors from the Chamber's membership as well as provides overall guidance to the program.

A local coordinator recruits students from the 12 participating high schools, brokers relationships with the mentors, and works with students to help them see the links between learning on the job and at school. One to One staff focuses on BEGIN-wide activities for the participating youths. One such example is a field trip for all to the floor of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange and an annual community service project. One to One also trains all BEGIN mentors and troubleshoots with high school coordinators throughout the year.

> If you want to partner with businesses, you also have to know what your community needs, because that's why they partner with you — they don't always know. You have to be able to tell them, "We need this kind of technical assistance from you and this in-kind assistance from you to meet this need," or you're going to lose them. And a business that has been burned will not come back.
>
> — *Patricia Smith Green, Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, program partner*

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A One to One Philadelphia mentor and youth on the job

One to One has many goals for its work in mentoring. They know that the dropout rate in city schools is 40 percent, and that a connection with an adult, particularly one who makes school seem more relevant to the workplace, will help lower that number. They know that schools and businesses need to be working more closely together if employers are to have the educated workforce they need and if schools are to have genuine support from the business community.

> I want to get an education, have a good job, and be able to come back to my neighborhood and offer jobs to people here, homeless people and others.
>
> *Kevin, program participant working at the Nehemiah Youth Mission*

Shadowing Day and BEGIN undoubtedly help achieve these goals, but measuring direct connection between such broad goals and these relatively small programs is tough. One to One staff relies instead on "process" measures: the number of students who are mentored in some way. Here their numbers are impressive but also reflect the program's challenges. They set high numerical goals for their work supported by The Hitachi Foundation: increasing the number of mentors in Shadowing Day from 2,500 to 3,000 and increasing the number of BEGIN mentors from 50 to 300. For Shadowing Day, these numbers were reached. For BEGIN, it turned out that this goal was overly ambitious; the labor involved in matching individual students with individual business mentors is great. Currently 160 students participate — more than triple the original number but less than envisioned.

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Lessons

PROGRAM PROFILES

Brokering Understanding

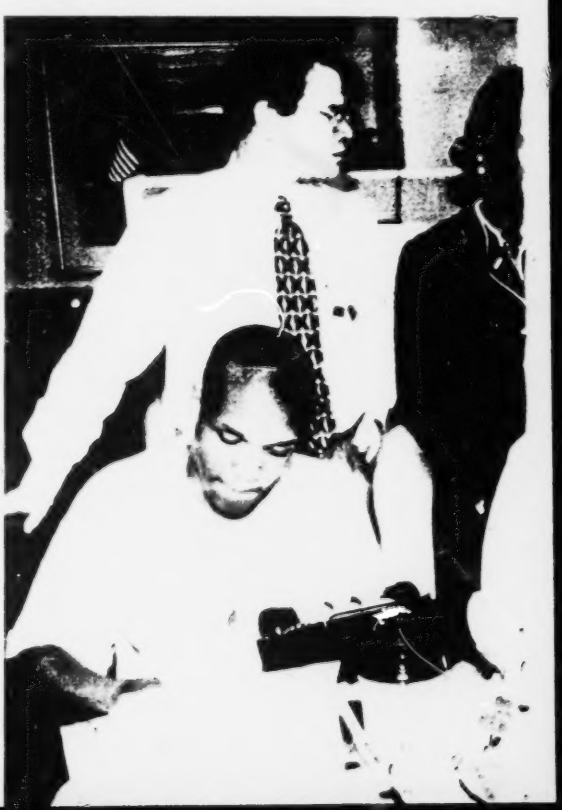
As an organization outside the school system, One to One has been in a strong position to create the partnerships that make these programs happen. Staff of One to One can see the point of view of businesspeople, educators within the school system, and students. The program provides a powerful vehicle to help businesspeople connect directly to schools. Businesspeople have come to understand the challenges teachers face of limited time, little access to phones, making the program work on top of an already full plate. Likewise, BEGIN opens the eyes of high school staff and administrators to the real-life pressures of business and its needs for a highly skilled workforce.

Time and Effort

The BEGIN program is based on the value of having a good match: a business person enthusiastic about mentoring and a student eager to learn about a particular field and be mentored. It is a rare business person willing to become a mentor for two hours each week. The time required to recruit these volunteers means the one staff person working on BEGIN is limited in how many matches can be made. Once signed on, One to One has learned that businesses, as well as students, need more support than originally envisioned. This can be offered, but the program, as a result, has to stay fairly small.

Recruiting Students

Teachers currently recruit students for BEGIN, and they look for students with average grades who could greatly benefit from the mentoring opportunity. Some students, however, do not have the motivation to make this experience work for them. One to One staff is considering whether a process of student self-selection might result in fewer unmotivated students.



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One to One program mentors and youth on the job

Challenges

Partner Accountability

Being outside of the school system has advantages and drawbacks. In BEGIN, a supportive School to Career Resource Coordinator is key to helping motivate and coordinate the program's high school coordinators, and to holding them accountable. When school coordinators are unable to meet their obligations, One to One staff, as an outside CBO, has little leverage to make changes occur. At the same time, Chamber of Commerce member volunteers commit to recruiting mentors, and when they are unable to meet their goals, One to One staff have to do so.

Growing the Numbers

Shadowing Day and BEGIN could serve many more young people but are stymied by the amount of staff time required for each business recruited to offer mentoring opportunities. A bigger job is keeping relationships strong with business volunteers so that they stay committed, because if they quit, a whole new relationship has to be built. This work is time consuming, and One to One has not been able to afford more staff to do it. The program has gotten better, smarter, stronger, but not bigger. Reaching a higher level of scale would take more full time staff.

Institutionalization

One to One started Shadowing Day and BEGIN with the plan that one day, the programs would transfer to another organization, but this hasn't happened. Recently there has been a great interest in the future of these two programs, mainly how they are to be sustained when Hitachi funding ends. Much will depend on the Superintendent of Schools, a champion of the programs, as well as the new workforce legislation. One to One expects a good solution to emerge.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce	*Planning, marketing the program, mentor recruiting*
School System	*Recruiting participants for Shadowing Day and BEGIN; working with BEGIN participants through special reflection sessions during school hours*
Local organizations, businesses, government, and academic institutions	*Mentors*
Local organization, government, and academic institutions	*In-kind sponsors*
Local Businesses	*Financial and in-kind sponsors*

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The Puente Project

Oakland, CA

Latino students are often underserved in American schools. At 41 percent, Latinos comprise the largest population group in California's public schools but have the lowest participation rate in higher education. Nearly half of all Latino high school students drop out before graduating; fewer than one in 25 Latino tenth graders will become eligible for the University of California system.

> I went to a high school where 60 percent dropped out. These programs work: you don't always see it at the time, but they work. They create pathways that do not exist. My group of students who came through Puente, they all made it, and they are thirty kids who wouldn't have otherwise.
>
> — *Michael Trevino, program alumnus and Assistant Dean of Public Policy, University of California at Berkeley*

The mission of the Puente Project is to increase the number of underrepresented students, primarily Latinos, who enroll in four-year colleges and universities, earn degrees, and return to the community as leaders to future generations. Puente is composed of two programs: a community college program and a high school program. The Puente community college program serves students in 38 colleges throughout the state. The Puente high school program serves 2,200 ninth- and tenth-grade students in 32 high schools throughout the state.

The Puente model has three major components — instruction in writing and literature, sustained and intensive academic and college counseling, and mentoring by professionals in the community. By providing an intensive academic and community-based foundation for Latino students, Puente encourages them to graduate from high school and enter four-year colleges. Puente is based on the premises that the community has the greatest stake in the success or failure of its educational program and that schools cannot succeed without the support of their communities.

Overview

The Puente High School Project began in 1993 as a four-year pilot program at seven high schools in five California school districts. It has grown to serve 32 schools in 14 districts as of spring 2000. The program is an outgrowth of the successful Puente Project, started in 1981 at Chabot College in Hayward, California.

Like the Puente community college program, the Puente High School Project is based on the theory that students who are provided with an academic environment that is engaging, respectful of their culture, and supported by their local community will succeed in an academically accelerated program. This system is in contrast to that used in some programs, where student achievement or lack thereof is considered a function of their abilities and environment and not of how well

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the program's structure meets their needs.

Puente's instructional component consists of a two-year enriched English class during ninth and tenth grades with a teacher who has been trained in Puente's methodologies. The students represent a cross section of learners, from lower-achieving to very high-achieving students. The work of acclaimed Latino writers is woven into the regular college preparatory English curriculum, providing a springboard for discussion about cultural and community issues. Students also engage in discussions about colleges, careers, and personal aspirations.

The counseling aspect of Puente provides oversight of participants' progress. For the four years a student is in high school, counselors ensure placement in college preparatory classes, timely completion of college entrance exams, and access to college financial aid information. Counselors arrange college preparation workshops and site visits for students and their parents. They also oversee the extramural Puente Club, where students manage fundraisers for field trips and provide each other with academic support.

The mentoring component of the program matches students with professionals in the community. Each Community Mentor Liaison (CML) recruits mentors from the Latino professional community, provides them with initial and on-going training, and, with the help of the counselors, matches each with one or more students in the program. Mentors provide students with a community, academic, and career role model and firsthand exposure to professional settings and responsibilities. The CML also enhances the relationship between the school and its community to increase community involvement and financial support.

In the 1997-98 school year, Puente added the Peer Partners program to increase the effectiveness of the mentoring component. High school juniors who completed the Puente program are matched with incoming Puente freshmen. Freshmen gain a role model and advisor who has been through the program, while juniors are able to stay connected to Puente, and Puente staff are able to stay involved with them. Some juniors receive community college credit for being a Peer Partner.

Parental involvement is essential to Puente's success. Parents chaperone field trips, write letters to school and government officials in

Puente students and a guest speaker in their English class

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support of Puente, and meet with mentors. Parents are also encouraged to attend Puente meetings and workshops, and parental involvement is 100 percent at some schools. Puente has increased parental commitment to the program through flexible programming to cultivate their understanding of its benefits.

In 1998 Puente received the prestigious Innovations in American Government Program award from the Ford Foundation in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government and the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

> I've been an English teacher for a long time, and I have gone through a lot of so-called "staff development." The teacher training offered by Puente is the only training I've received that has real integrity.
>
> — *Puente English Teacher*

The retention rate of Puente high school students is higher than 92 percent. An evaluation of the Puente high school program found that 31 percent of Puente high school graduates enrolled in four-year colleges, compared with only 13 percent of non-Puente students. In the class of 1997, about twice as many students who completed Puente planned to enroll in state universities as non-Puente students. Furthermore, 97 percent of Puente students have not dropped out of high school.

Puente has also positively affected the schools in which it operates. Eighty-six percent of the principals, head counselors, and English department chairs at Puente schools felt their schools had improved in measurable ways as a result of the project, notably in students' and parents' enthusiasm and participation and in increased commitment to the school on the part of the Latino community. Puente also estimates that about 30,000 non-Puente high school students have benefited from the methods employed by Puente-trained teachers and counselors.

Puente looks to build on its successes by continuing to increase the high school retention rate and college acceptance and enrollment rates of participants, and the number of students who know the requirements to apply to college, who participate in extracurricular activities and leadership positions in their schools, and who mentor younger students. Lastly, Puente aims to continue strengthening the infrastructure within its schools and the integration of the program into the schools. These improvements will provide more comprehensive training for and better communication between teachers and counselors and a stronger network among school, parents, and community.

Lessons

High Expectations, High Support

The Puente High School program's multicomponent strategy provides underserved and underachieving students with accelerated academic instruction, sustained academic guidance, and mentoring by members of their community. Thus, the students are able to achieve higher rates of academic success in high school and enrollment in four-year colleges.

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Leveraged Benefits

The benefits of Puente's initial and ongoing staff development for teachers, counselors, and community mentor liaisons extend beyond the students participating in the program to the entire school and its community.

Motivating Parents

Puente parents' increased participation is extending beyond program activities to the campus as a whole. A study found that since their children enrolled in Puente, parents participate more in all school events.

Challenges

Systemic Benefits

A staff training program that is more comprehensive, including more teachers, counselors, and administrators, could increase the positive effects of Puente on each school as a whole by increasing skills and innovation broadly in the school community.

Staffing Continuity

The "Puente Team" of involved staff and faculty at each school could provide better and more multifaceted service for their students, but this is impaired by the high staff turnover rate and the arrangement whereby CMLs must split their time between two sites.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
Teachers, counselors, and community mentor liaisons at 32 schools and their districts	*Undergoing special training and leading program*
Mentors	*Promoting participants' academic and career success*
University of California	*Financial support*
Parents	*Participating in specially designed parent activities; meeting with mentors; advocating for Puente*

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South Bronx Community Coalition, Multi-Media Education/Leadership Initiative

Bronx, NY

The Hunts Point neighborhood in New York's South Bronx includes a thriving creative and artistic community, as well as the economic hardships common to older, inner-city neighborhoods. For decades, Hunts Point has drawn premier music groups, artists, and dancers — in part due to the community's appreciation for and nurturing of the arts. The community is primarily Latino and African American and draws heavily from these two cultures' artistic heritages. What Hunts Point doesn't have is a thriving economic infrastructure: area businesses are small and employ few people, except for the wastewater- and refuse-processing plants that border the neighborhood but offer mainly low-wage jobs with little room for advancement.

> Going to The Point [the youth program] has given me the chance to indulge in things I wouldn't have been exposed to otherwise. At first, I was the only one of my friends who was working, and now I see that everybody is in The Point now. It gets them off the street and gives them something to do. Didn't ever find any logic for hanging out on the street, so The Point gave me the opportunity to make my own money and give back to my parents.
>
> — *Steven Gonzalez, program participant*

The Hunts Point Multi-Media Education/Leadership Initiative, a South Bronx Community Coalition (SBCC) program, couples the community's appreciation for creative expression with the power of technology to create clear pathways for young people to computer multi-media and videography careers. The Multi-Media Initiative's goal is to develop in young people self-esteem, a sense of responsibility, and skills for community building while giving them an opportunity to identify their talents and exercise the new skills that will allow them to become competitive and productive in the workforce.

Overview

The Hunts Point Multi-Media Education/Leadership Initiative works with 10 young people every year in its intensive, hands-on training program. The program targets 16- to 21-year-olds and includes basic employment skills development, technical skills training, project management, and community action.

The Point Community Development Corporation, an arts and enterprise nonprofit organization that houses 19 programs that promote the creative arts and small businesses based on the arts, provides facilities and also recruits candidates for the program. The Point is one of three collaborators in the South

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> In urban areas, the pressures are different. The cost of living can be so much higher, can put so much more pressure on the families with parents having to work two jobs, than in less expensive areas. It means there's a much bigger need for schools and CBOs to be available to provide safe care for the kids, because private care is just too expensive.
>
> *— Kahil Shkymba, program staff*

Bronx Community Coalition; the others are UNITAS, a program that teaches mentoring skills to teenagers and then pairs them with younger children; and Banana Kelly, a community development corporation that focuses on community and housing revitalization.

Candidates for the Multi-Media Initiative undergo a "job interview" with the program director, during which each presents a resume of school, work, and community activities. The program director selects 10 participants with a variety of backgrounds, education levels, and life experiences so that the group learns to work with a variety of people. Some are still in school and have never had a job; some are post-adjudicated; some have dropped out of school; some may have experience working with computers or video equipment. The program requires a significant investment of time by the participants — several hours every weekday afternoon — but also provides a stipend.

The basic employment skill development begins immediately, with an emphasis on responsibility, punctuality, attendance, and teamwork. Participants who fail to show up without calling in or who are repeatedly late risk having their stipend docked — a strong incentive that teaches how behavior has real-life consequences in the job world. During the yearlong program, many of the young people encounter problems at home or in school that affect their participation. The program director uses his knowledge of the community and its culture to work with them on an individual basis to develop their conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, both of which are valuable life and employment skills.

The Multi-Media Initiative's technical skills training involves working hands-on with computers and video equipment to create multi-media and video presentations. Participants learn to operate the equipment and computer

A Multi-Media Initiative youth and program partner in the Hunts Point neighborhood

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software while becoming versed in the industry's jargon. Since equipment is limited, the youth also learn how to manage their time and share work stations, with more knowledgeable participants assisting those with less experience. The participants also gain experience "in the field" working as assistants to videographers on professional assignments in the area.

> CBOs are sometimes afraid to ask for too much, but if you ask appropriately and you put it in your planning, funding partners know that you know what you're going to do. The better your planning, the better the response. When I know how to account for every single dime, I get a better response. You have to think more like a business. That effort in the beginning can make the end a lot smoother.
>
> — *Kahil Shkymba, program staff*

The yearlong program is centered on each student planning and creating a multi-media video project. The projects focus on documenting a community event or issue, which both educates participants about their community and promotes their civic responsibility and engagement. One such project documented the health and environmental impact of the nearby waste treatment facilities on the community. While the project sharpens each participant's planning, resource management, critical thinking, and technical skills, it also develops leadership and interpersonal skills as participants work with fellow residents to capture important issues and events.

Lessons

Culture is an Economic Asset

This community has a culture of celebrating creativity, and that is part of the draw for young people to the Multi-Media program. Youth learn employment and technical skills while expressing themselves creatively through their own productions and by documenting other performing and visual arts events, an endeavor respected by the members of their community.

Developing Conflict Resolution and Problem-solving Skills is Labor Intensive

Youth commit to at least a year in the program, and during that time their participation is usually affected by problems they encounter at home, in the neighborhood, or in school. The program director works with the youths on an individual basis to develop their conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, a labor-intensive effort that pays off for the participants and their future employers.

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Sustainability Requires Stability

While the Multi-Media Initiative is a small project that only began with The Hitachi Foundation's funding, the South Bronx Community Coalition is a collaboration of three larger, established community-based organizations. Since the Multi-Media Initiative was launched, one of the CBOs has undergone an organizational restructuring, and another has had changes in staff, complicating efforts to refine the program and build strong partner relationships.

> We have faced a challenge in coordinating our program with three partners that all have different hierarchies, different decision-making structures. If a crisis happens with one partner losing a staff member, it can put the whole program behind.
>
> — *Kahil Shkymba, program staff*

High Tech Can Equal High Cost

Multi-media skills are valued in the high-tech job market, and can result in a well-paying career. However, the equipment, software, and supplies necessary to teach such skills are expensive and can become outdated quickly. Developing and maintaining good relationships with in-kind donors is a time-consuming effort that must continue if the program's training is to stay up-to-date and cost-effective.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
The Point Community Development Corp.	*Facilities, recruiting candidates*
UNITAS	*Conflict resolution training*
Banana Kelly	*Project oversight*
Local school district	*Recruiting candidates*
Local businesses	*Additional support, internships*

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Southend Community Services, Our Piece of the Pie

Hartford, CT

I enjoy b[illegible]g here because I can put artistic talents to good use, and the great part is that I'm getting paid for something. The program has had a positive impact on my life. I learned how to work at a business and how to put my talent into business form.

— *Clifton Byrd, JAM participant*

Hartford is the capital city of one of the most prosperous states in the country, but many people in the city do not share in the wealth. The city is the fourth poorest in the U.S. among cities of its size. Hartford's school system has a cumulative four-year dropout rate of 48.9 percent, and youth are presented with few options for securing their economic future.

Our Piece of the Pie (OPP), a project of Southend Community Services, focuses on Hartford's disadvantaged young people, aiming to move them from being "consumers of services" to being "producers of opportunity." Functioning as a self-described "Youth Business Incubator," Our Piece of the Pie acts as a career accelerator for youth by offering hands-on entrepreneurial experience in businesses that young people create and manage for themselves. Through its youth employment company, Our Piece of the Pie provides pre-employment training, and then participants work closely with youth managers who are high school and college students from similar backgrounds. The youth managers help participants develop individual work programs to match their skills to part-time and full-time jobs in the community.

Southend Community Services and The Connecticut Forum founded Our Piece of the Pie in collaboration with a broad group of local organizations. Southend is a multiservice neighborhood organization, and the mission of the Forum, also a nonprofit, is to promote dialog and build consensus on issues facing the community.

Overview

Our Piece of the Pie targets youth between the ages of 14 and 21 living in underserved black, Latino, and low-income neighborhoods. High school and college students as well as those who are out of school, unemployed, or underemployed are all part of the mix. Elements of the Youth Business Incubator include Youth Business, Youth Employment, and Youth Leadership Development programs.

OPP **Youth Businesses** combine entrepreneurship and work experience in areas related to young people's career interest. Working with young adult mentors and senior program staff, young people conceive, plan, and operate their own profit-producing enterprises. Current companies include:

- Junior Art Makers (JAM), where youth design, package, and sell holiday and greeting cards;

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- Your Heart's D'Lite, where students prepare and sell sandwiches to students at Hartford High School;
- City Cookies, which makes and sells cookies at regional high schools;
- River Wrights Boat Builders, where post-adjudicated young people handcraft wooden row boats for community boating programs; and
- Urban Greens, where students grow herbs and vegetables hydroponically and sell them to local restaurants.

> Being in this program has helped me learn how to organize my time and use my skills. I plan on going to college after I graduate. I've learned to express myself through my art-work. I think this program has helped me to decide what goals in life I plan to make come true, because art is a beautiful way to express yourself and to help others understand you.
>
> — *R.L. Privette, JAM participant*

In addition to hands-on work and business management experience, these programs offer several other benefits. Students in each business rotate through its jobs to gain a broader level of experiences; for example, at City Cookies, a young person would gain experience serving customers, cashiering, preparing food, and handling business administration such as bank deposits or working with suppliers. All of the businesses are providing tangible, valuable services to their clients, both benefiting the community and providing a sense of real accomplishment for the youth. The students that operate each of the businesses carry the true weight of being responsible for its success or failure — a real-life experience difficult to emulate in many youth development programs. And as profit-generating enterprises (and they do turn a profit), the businesses are on their way to being self-sustaining, which is a difficult but creative solution to the funding problem faced by many community-based programs.

Each of the businesses is involved in collaborative partnerships with area schools, businesses, or other community-based organizations. For example, the program draws on Trinity College and other local higher education institutions to supply youth managers. The youth boat-building program, River Wrights, uses materials donated by local hardware and lumber businesses to manufacture wooden rowboats that are used by not-for-profit camps and community rowing programs.

At OPP's youth employment company, **Helping Employ Youth** (HEY), staff members and youth managers provide participants with preemployment training, job placement, and on-the-job support, while serving as an employment clearinghouse for area jobs for young people. HEY involves close collaboration

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> CBOs are uniquely positioned to work with kids, to figure out what's working and what's not working, then to go out and find the appropriate partnerships that will create a successful outcome. I think what too many people do is just run to the corporations with a big budget, when the corporations are already funding 60 other organizations. I've had much more success getting wood [for River Wrights] and tools and space, for example, things that reduce my bottom line, than getting money. It's made us much more strategic about who we seek out as partners.
>
> — *Alan Mckenzie, director, Southend Community Services*

with Hartford public schools, other youth development programs, and local employers. The company concentrates on jobs that youth want with local businesses in insurance, health, tourism, arts and media, and financial services. These are all high-growth, high-wage sectors of the economy that give disadvantaged youth experience in worlds they might not otherwise know.

Through its Youth Leadership Development program, OPP develops the leadership potential of recent college graduates and current college students who are mainly black and Latino and who, like the participants in Youth Businesses and Helping Employ Youth, grew up economically disadvantaged. OPP employs the college graduates and students as youth managers of Our Piece of the Pie programs and recruits them to serve as mentors for younger participants. This strategy provides real work and leadership experience for the college grads and students while also providing role models for the students — proof that people like them, with the same backgrounds, can succeed in higher education and in developing meaningful, sustaining careers.

Our Piece of the Pie has had great success in preparing young people to succeed in the workforce. In its business incubator, for example, Junior Art Makers demonstrated its students' capabilities with 1999 sales of $30,000 and paid out $14,000 to participants. HEY, the youth employment company, has also had great success. In 1998, it trained 457 young people and placed 250 in career-related positions. OPP and its programs have also been widely reviewed and celebrated in the local press, signifying the community's interest and support. The program has also done an excellent job tapping into the city's tight leadership network and generating support from major Hartford area businesses and community organizations.

Lessons

Demonstrating Results to Young People

Our Piece of the Pie is "keeping it simple." By offering both workplace orientation and job placement through its employment company, OPP can tell kids, "If you complete this program, we'll find you a job." The program has also developed viable businesses that offer young people the chance to operate and make a profit. OPP also draws youth managers from local colleges to mirror the ethnicity and background of participants, providing role models who reinforce how success comes from perseverance.

A JAM youth reviews art for a printing job

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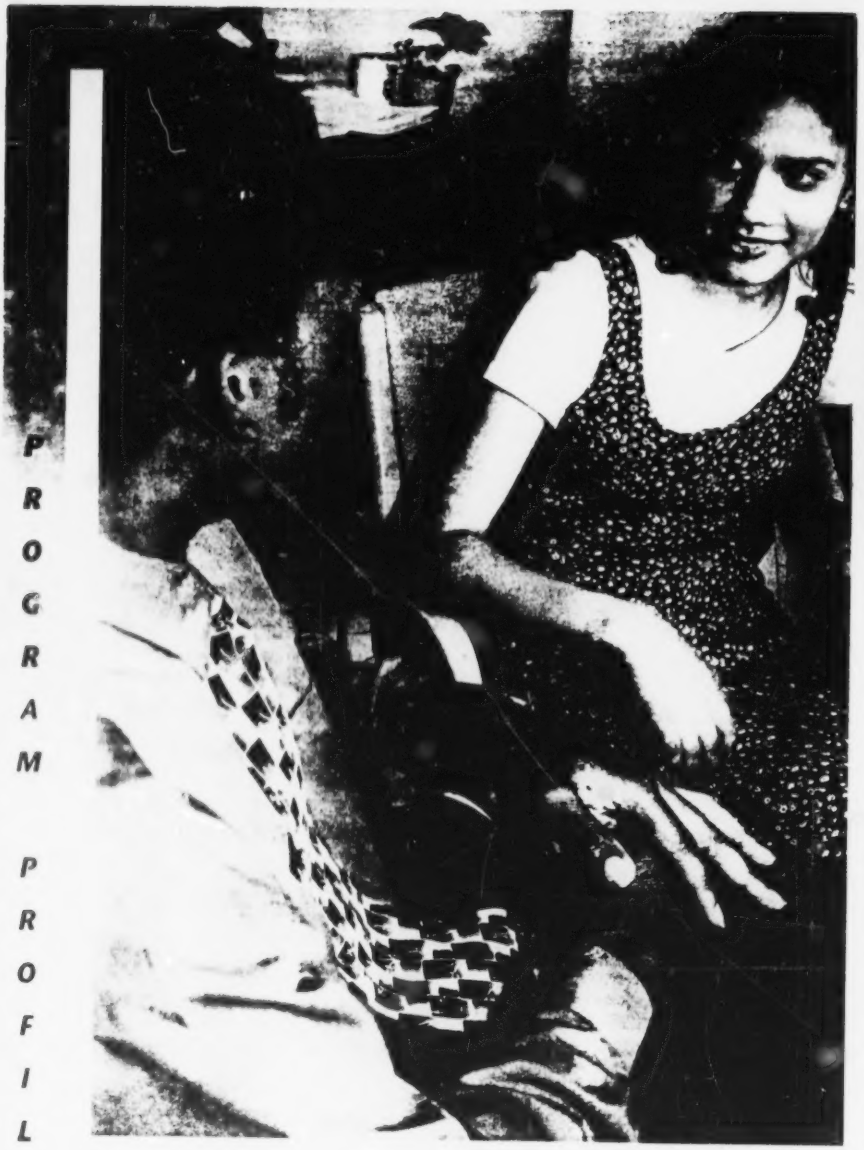

A youth manager and participant in the Helping Employ Youth program

> I am forever struck that there are so many different ways that we can actually work with young people on their development. But why should any of us be surprised? Growing up is not a clean process; it happens in lots of different ways.
>
> — Bob Rath, director, Our Piece of the Pie

Develop Young Leaders

Our Piece of the Pie is building a cadre of youth managers poised to take leadership roles in Hartford and in youth development. This dual development of school-age participants and of youth managers is an intentional strategy that will benefit the young people, the program, and the community.

Organizational Strength

OPP is not a stand-alone program but is connected to a mature and respected neighborhood organization that is big enough to provide staff support, but not so big that OPP gets lost in the shuffle. The program has also become stronger through its partnerships with the business community. The businesses add to the program's legitimacy, provide work placements for participants, and provide resources — funding and materials — for the program.

Reflection has Value

Our Piece of the Pie's leadership team — project directors, administrators, and youth managers — engages in weekly meetings about how they can work better and smarter. This helps both staff members and youth managers to be reflective practitioners, a practice that would benefit any nonprofit or youth development agency. This learning practice works and leads to ongoing program improvements because lead staff genuinely respect the youth managers and listen to and act on their ideas.

A Program's Philosophy has Power

"Youth in front, adults in the background" is OPP's business philosophy. Adhering to this youth-focused statement results in participants gaining real-life business experience with strong adult support.

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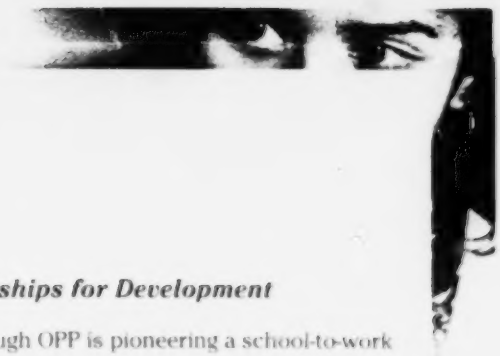

Challenges

Performance Measurement

Our Piece of the Pie, like many youth development organizations nationwide, has struggled to develop measurable indicators of success. In an effort to advance the rigor of the training offered to youth, program staff, youth managers, and teachers and counselors from participating schools are developing a set of competencies based on the recommendations of the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) that will be incorporated into the program, and a third-party contractor will assess performance based on related indicators. *(For more information on SCANS, see page 83.)*

Partnerships for Development

Even though OPP is pioneering a school-to-work effort by creating opportunities for young people to learn as they earn, the program struggles to compete for school-to-work funds against more traditional deliverers of service, such as community colleges. One way OPP is addressing this funding challenge is by continuing its efforts to tap into and make better use of the rich resources in Hartford's business and professional communities by developing its board.

Contact Information

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Project Partner	Role
City of Hartford	*Financial support, community service placements, access to customers*
Hartford Public Schools	*Access to youth, adult advisors, classroom space after school for training and youth businesses*
Local colleges	*Older youth role models and managers*
Local businesses	*Technical and in-kind support, youth jobs, markets for youth business products, adult advisors and volunteers, recognition event sponsors, financial support*
Local Foundations	*Financial support*
Community-based Organizations	*Collaborators, access to youth, financial support*

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Going to Scale

A Final Set of Lessons

At some point in the evolution of a community-based organization's work serving young people comes the question of *scale*: How do we serve more young people and grow the organization in such a way that we can pay for it and manage the change internally? Some organizations know their limits and are content to work with a few people well, but others can and should grapple with how to reach more youth.

Good programs with a track record of success owe it to the rest of us to spread success. As a part of the *Partnerships* initiative, The Hitachi Foundation asked the participating programs to consider possible methods of growth and program replication, to reflect on whether and how it might be possible to increase the impact of their programs by working with more young people or operating in more communities.

Felix Galaviz, cofounder of the Puente Project

The Hitachi Foundation included programs in different stages of evolution, with some just starting up and some ready to tackle issues of substantial growth, so that they could learn from one another. The Puente Program had been learning, over time, some things about how to achieve real scale. When they received a grant from Hitachi, Puente had already spread its model for equipping Latino students to succeed in community college throughout dozens of community colleges in California. (See p. 65 for Puente program description.) Support from The Hitachi Foundation allowed the organization to move into high schools. Three years later, Puente operates in 32 high schools, with more than 50 others asking to come into the program.

Pat Martin and Felix Galaviz cofounded Puente some twenty years ago. While their success in numbers may seem overwhelming to a small CBO (or even a big one) that wants to "go to scale," the lessons they preach are simple. Of course, like all lessons, they are hard earned, and Pat and Felix have faced plenty of failure and frustrations along the way.

Keep focused

Figure out what about your program works and is essential to making a difference in the lives of young people. Work on strengthening

and spreading that model and never simply follow the money. Puente has been asked dozens of times by a funder to consider taking the program in a different direction, and they and their staff also "have thousands of ideas — all good ones" that could, if they are not careful, get them off track. Instead, they have resisted that temptation and not gotten sidetracked.

Maintain rigorous standards

High schools and colleges must enter a competitive process to participate in the Puente program, and admission is not guaranteed. Applications are screened against criteria that Puente holds for participation. Also, Puente requires that teachers, counselors, and mentors who run the Puente program in each school or college be trained in effective practice relating to their part of the program. The training is rigorous and essential as one way in which the program ensures quality control as it grows.

Build the spirit of a movement

Pat and Felix are deeply passionate people, and as cofounders, they have attracted people equally committed to working tirelessly to achieve Puente's mission. The spirit of purpose forges a strong "movement mentality" among the core Fuente staff, as well as the many teachers, counselors, and mentors with whom they work. Pat and Felix see Puente as "a vehicle by which educators who care can realize their purpose."

Use data, and promote successes

Puente learned early on that successes, if documented in quantitative terms, sold the program. They have integrated systems into the program that allow each school to capture quantitative data about students' academic success (e.g., retention, college transfer, grade performance). Anecdotes are essential and powerful, but there is no substitute for real, compelling numbers.

Grow from the inside out

As Puente has grown (from a staff of 2 to a staff of 50, 19 of whom are in the field), Pat and Felix and a core management team work collaboratively to manage the process of growth and related organizational change. The ongoing question for this group is "How do we not kill this organization by growing too quickly?" Through a careful process of reflection, and with the help of management consultants, Puente staff analyze what has to change internally, *within* the organization, in order to grow well, as opposed to simply looking at where to expand, how to get bigger, and then figuring out the internal issues later.

esources

General Resources Available in Many Communities

Organization	Ways They Can Partner
School Districts	*Recruiting participants; supporting youth in programs; providing guidance to students*
Community Colleges or other local post-secondary education institutions	*Potential partner for collaborative efforts, networking with area school-to-work efforts, workforce development technical assistance*
Chambers of Commerce	*Connecting with individual business partners for internship, mentoring options; providing information on local economy and/or assisting with planning related to career options in the local economy*
Community Development Corporations and other nonprofits focused on workforce and/or economic development	*Funding, networking with local businesses and other organizations, workforce development technical assistance*
United Way	*Funding, networking with local businesses and other organizations, potential partners for collaborative efforts*
Community Foundations	*Funding, networking with local organizations, connections to technical assistance*
Hospital Conversion Foundations (new community endowments created by the private purchase of public and community hospitals)	*Funding, potential partners for collaborative efforts*
Grantmakers for Children, Youth, and Families (an affinity group of the Council on Foundations composed of donors interested in youth development)	*Funding, networking with other organizations, model practices through funded programs*
Boys and Girls Clubs	*Connections to youth, networking with other organizations*
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	*Connections to mentors, connections to youth, networking with other organizations*

SCANS Workforce 2000

and the Partnerships Initiative

Definition of SCANS Know-How, Workplace Competencies

Resources

Manages Time — Selects relevant, goal-related activities; ranks them in order of importance; allocates time to activities; and understands, prepares, and follows schedules.

Manages Money — Uses or prepares budgets, including making cost and revenue forecasts; keeps detailed records to track budget performance; and makes appropriate adjustments.

Manages Material and Facility Resources — Acquires, stores, and distributes materials, supplies, parts, equipment, space, or final products in order to make the best use of them.

Manages Human Resources — Assesses knowledge and skills, distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance, and provides feedback.

Interpersonal

Participates as a Member of a Team — Works cooperatively with others and contributes to group efforts with ideas, suggestions, and effort.

Teaches Others — Helps others learn needed knowledge and skills.

Serves Clients/Customers — Works and communicates with clients and customers to satisfy their expectations.

Exercises Leadership — Communicates thoughts, feelings, and ideas to justify a position, encourage, persuade, convince, or otherwise motivate an individual or groups, including responsibly challenging existing procedures, policies, or authority.

Negotiates to Arrive at a Decision — Works towards an agreement that may involve exchanging specific resources or resolving divergent interests.

Works with Cultural Diversity — Works well with men and women and with people from a variety of ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds.

Information

Acquires and Evaluates Information — Identifies a need for data, obtains the data from existing sources or creates them, and evaluates their relevance and accuracy.

Organizes and Maintains Information — Organizes, processes, and maintains written or computerized records and other forms of information in a systematic fashion.

Interprets and Communicates Information — Selects and analyzes information and communicates the results to others using oral, written, graphic, pictorial, or multi-media methods.

Uses Computers to Process Information — Employs computers to acquire, organize, analyze, and communicate information.

Systems

Understand Systems — Knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them.

Monitors and Corrects Performance — Distinguishes trends, predicts impacts of actions on system operations, diagnoses deviations in the functioning of a system/organization, and takes necessary action to correct performance.

Improves and Designs Systems — Makes suggestions to modify existing systems in order to improve the quality of products or services and develops new or alternative systems.

Technology

Selects Technology — Judges which sets of procedures, tools, or machines, including computers and their programs, will produce the desired results.

Applies Technology to Task — Understands the overall intents and the proper procedures for setting up and operating machines, including computers and their programming systems.

Maintains and Troubleshoots Technology — Prevents, identifies, or solves problems in machines, computers, and other technologies.

Source: Learning for a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance
The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
U.S. Department of Labor, April 1992. (800) 788-SKILL

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